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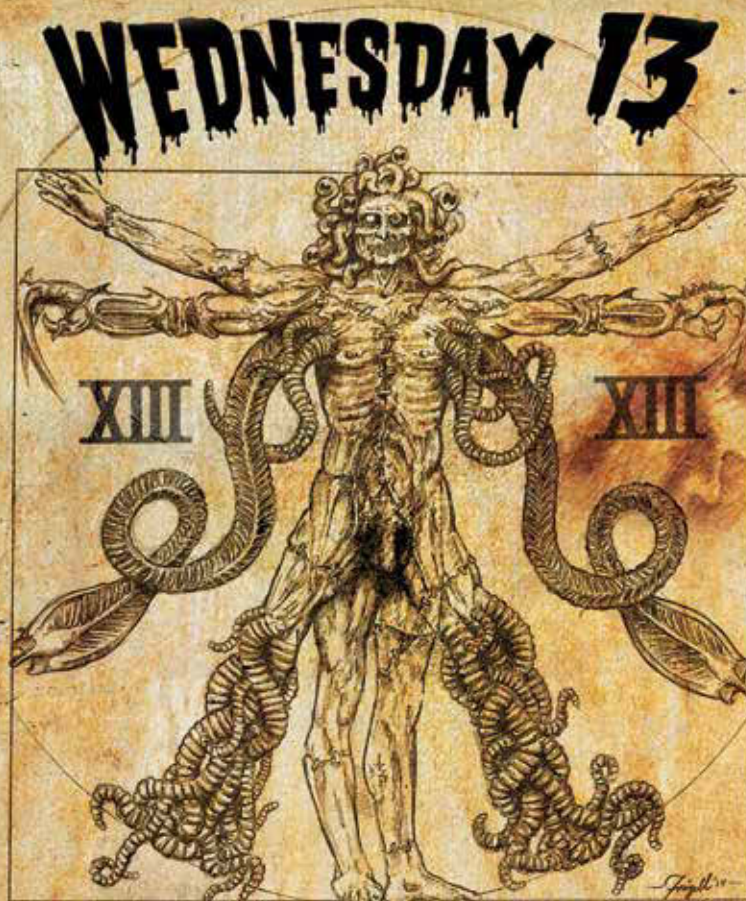


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Photo: John Raptis

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WELCOME THE SHIFT IS ON!

It was back in HEAVY Issue 8 when I first said I felt the first stirrings of a movement in the Australian rock and metal scene. Back then I described it as a ripple; I'm now prepared to call it a wave.

The Aussie assault is firmly underway, and while I don't have any stats to prove it, there's enough anecdotal evidence to show there's been a surge in the number of Australian rock and metal bands touring internationally. Look at the bills and you can see for yourself that Aussie acts are now appearing on large foreign festival bills as a matter of course, something that was once considered mostly out of reach.

Be'lakor and Psycroptic will be flying the flag at this year's Brutal Assault in Europe, Disentomb seem to be in Indonesia every other month and King Parrot practically live in the US, only returning home long enough to neck a VB, throw back a pie and piss off the neighbours. Inside this issue, there's also Ne Obliviscaris, who are about to commence a world tour; Dead City Ruins, who are relocating to Germany to make the most of their new signing to Teutonic label Metalville Records; and The Kill, who are mainstays at the Czech Republic's Obscene Extreme festival.

In fact, The Amity Affliction, In Hearts Wake, Northlane, Parkway Drive, Caligula's Horse, Karnivool, Prepared Like a Bride, Eye of the Enemy, Aversions Crown, Hand of Mercy, Deez Nuts, Claim the Throne, Heaven the Axe, Colossvs, Desecrator, The Schoenberg Automaton, Truth Corroded, Riff Fist and Terra Australis are all more bands who are going overseas this year... and that's far from a complete list.

The wall has fallen, the barriers have crumbled. This international touring push is by far the largest change to have occurred to the local scene in the past five years. The best part is that all of this overseas touring action is having an undeniable and invaluable knock-on effect here at home.

AJ Maddah's Soundwave festival has repeatedly come under fire for not including enough domestic acts but AJ has always had the same view: there's no place for nationalist nepotism at a festival aiming to be world class, and bands who wish to play this country's largest stages need to show they are as equally deserving, professional and driven as their international comrades.

I agree with him emphatically - handing out charity is no way to grow a local scene; it leads to complacency and a feeling of self-entitlement among bands.

Now that Australian bands have stepped up, Maddah has been true to his word and added a higher quota of Aussie acts to this year's festival.

Just imagine what is possible if this trend continues. Exciting times are dead ahead, my friends.

- Nick Lord



Photo: Nelli Scarlet

DON'T JUST READ THIS MAG LISTEN TO IT!

Got a smartphone? By that I mean an iPhone or an Android? If so, this magazine you're holding is about to come alive with **HEAVY MUSIC!**



But first you'll need a QR code reader, and we recommend you download the **FREE Digimarc Discover** app from iTunes, or wherever else you can get your hands on it.

By simply holding your smartphone about 6-10cm above a QR code (ie. that Lego nightmare looking thing above) you can instantly access songs (and/or videos) on that same band you've just been reading about. Pretty cool, eh!? It's a whole new magazine reading experience. Enjoy!



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Two Decades of Destruction: the playlist



PLAYLIST

'Two Decades'
@Spotify

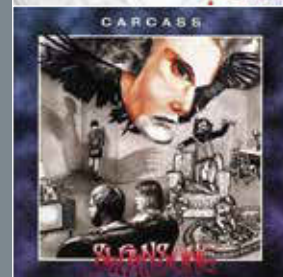
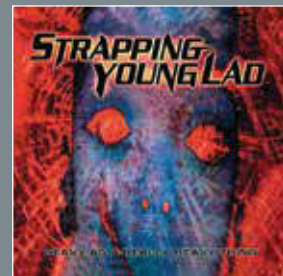
Let's kick off a brand new year with a playlist that highlights all the great albums that were released in the fine year of 1995, which, thanks to the sands of time constantly running through the hour glass, was 20 goddamn years ago! [What happened to my life?! – Ed.]

If you remember buying any of these albums when they were released, you're super old; if you bought them years later from the bargain bin at one of the now defunct or dwindling record stores Brashs, HMV, Sanity or Dixons Recycled then you're moderately old; if you only ever downloaded them to play on your iPod or phone then congratulations, you've still got your precious, precious youth.

Whatever age you are, take a trip down memory lane by listening to our Two Decades of Destruction playlist for free on Spotify at this link: bit.ly/1995

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| At The Gates | <i>Suicide Nation (Slaughter of the Soul)</i> |
| Nevermore | <i>The Hurting Words (Nevermore)</i> |
| Moonspell | <i>Love Crimes (Wolfheart)</i> |
| Death | <i>Misanthrope (Symbolic)</i> |
| Meshuggah | <i>Transfixion (Destroy Erase Improve)</i> |
| Faith No More | <i>Digging the Grave (King for A Day, Fool For A Lifetime)</i> |
| Carcass | <i>Childs Play (Swansong)</i> |
| Alice in Chains | <i>Heaven Beside You (Alice in Chains)</i> |
| White Zombie | <i>More Human Than Human (Astro Creep: 2000)</i> |
| Opeth | <i>Under the Weeping Moon (Orchid)</i> |
| Strapping Young Lad | <i>S.Y.L. (Heavy As A Really Heavy Thing)</i> |
| Fear Factory | <i>Replica (Demanufacture)</i> |
| Deicide | <i>Children of the Underworld (Once Upon The Cross)</i> |
| Dark Tranquillity | <i>The Gallery (The Gallery)</i> |
| Skid Row | <i>Eileen (Subhuman Race)</i> |
| Iron Maiden | <i>The Edge of Darkness (The X Factor)</i> |
| Van Halen | <i>Can't Stop Lovin' You (Balance)</i> |
| The Smashing Pumpkins | <i>Zero (Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness)</i> |
| Darkthrone | <i>Beholding the Throne of Might (Panzerfaust)</i> |
| Kyuss | <i>Gloria Lewis (... And the Circus Leaves Town)</i> |
| Marilyn Manson | <i>Diary of a Dope Fiend (Smells Like Children)</i> |
| Silverchair | <i>Tomorrow (Frogstomp)</i> |
| The Tea Party | <i>Sister Awake (The Edges of Twilight)</i> |
| Iced Earth | <i>Brainwashed (Burnt Offerings)</i> |
| Primus | <i>Southbound Pachyderm (Tales From the Punchbowl)</i> |
| Megadeth | <i>Go to Hell (Hidden Treasures)</i> |
| Ozzy Osbourne | <i>Perry Mason (Ozzmosis)</i> |
| Rammstein | <i>Asche Zu Asche (Herzeleid)</i> |
| Anathema | <i>Nocturnal Emission (The Silent Enigma)</i> |
| In Flames | <i>Biosphere (Subterranean)</i> |

Albums compiled by Amanda Mason



Questions: Nick Lord Photo courtesy of Be'lakor

Slamming Studio Report



Melbourne melodic death maestros Be'lakor are slaving away in the studio to produce a follow-up to the excellent *Of Breath and Bone* (2012). HEAVY editor Nick Lord forces keyboardist Steve Merry into a corner and cajoles him into revealing some of the band's most-guarded secrets.

You named your band after Warhammer. Will you be naming this album something similarly geeky?
Wait, Warhammer is geeky?! This explains everything.

Where are you recording it, who's working on it and what the hell did he do to deserve this?

We are recording the album at Legion Studio Productions. The exceptional Mr. Julian Renzo – a member of Melbourne band Jack the Stripper – is working on it. We're not sure what he did to deserve it but if the concept of karma is correct, it was most likely some sort of appalling war crime.

What disasters have befallen this recording thus far? Drumskins broken by the hammers of Thor? Flatulence in the vocal booth? Public transport fines?

On the first day of recording, we woke up and were horrified to discover that we were mediocre musicians. We'd also forgotten to write lyrics. Naturally, we blame gluten for all of this.

Who's the cheap scab who never buys lunch while in the studio?

That would be all of us. We're all weak from hunger and malnutrition but nobody wants to be the first to cave.

You seem to draw heavily on baroque and neoclassical art and language in your recordings/lyrics. Who would've been the first member of the band to die in the Middle Ages and how?

Thanks to recent advances in DNA sequencing technology, we can now say with certainty that George would have died in early adulthood following a livestock-related misadventure. So, in the Middle Ages, he'd have been about nine years old.

What activities would you ban from the studio? Who drives the others mad with his disgusting personal habits?

We've consistently sought to ban any playing of musical instruments but apparently Pro-Tools just "isn't quite there yet", according to our engineer Julian. As for the repugnant personal habits, I really can't say. (It's John!)

Name three of the reference albums you're using on this recording.

Absolutely. Engelbert Humperdinck's *A Man Without Love*

(1968), *After the Lovin* (1976) and, of course, the classic *You and Your Lover* (1986). We weren't initially sure about *After the Lovin* but if you really want to penetrate today's saturated market, you've got to make hard choices.

What happens to members of Be'lakor who haven't rehearsed enough?

Pro-tools, that's what happens. Every member. Every album.

What plug-in are you guys employing that you'd never ever dare let anyone know about?

There are many but we don't know what they're called. They're really good though; they can make us sound like intermediate musicians!

Who was the last person to use the words "let's add another guitar harmony" in there? What happened to them?

I believe it was Shaun. An unorthodox suggestion, it was originally met with surprise and then universal agreement. Beards were stroked as murmurs of approval filled the hall.

Are there any Australian bands left who haven't played Summer Breeze?

Phil Para Band. My understanding is that they're under house arrest at the Espy.

Do you guys own castles in Europe yet? What would be the best use of a dungeon?

No, but if we did, the dungeon would almost certainly be used to imprison people. [Astonishing! – Ed.]

If 2004 Be'lakor met modern-day Be'lakor, would they respect you or would there be fights? Who would win?

We would give them explicit instructions to write pop music. The fact that we'd all be still wearing the same clothes would underscore the point.

What do I have to do to ensure I am the first person on my street with the new Be'lakor album?

Very little, really. You're probably lucky enough to be the only guy on your street who even knows we exist!

Anything else we really, really need to know?

Twenty percent of office coffee cups contain faecal matter.

intothevoid

STONER/FUZZ NEWS WITH ANTHONY MOORE

US: Heavy psych / stoner metallers Elder are set to release their third full-length *Lore* on February 28 through Armageddon (USA) and Stickman Records (Europe). Featuring five tracks with only one that just comes in under 10 minutes, this album still maintains their heavy psych sound as well as delves into more cosmic, krautrock, prog, classic heavy rock and doom.

US: Fister are unleashing their 12th release to date around April. The 44-minute long full-length album is a single track that will be called *IV*. It's out through Crown And Throne Ltd on vinyl. Fister are known for their sludgy dirty doom and unique packaging. This will not disappoint!

Melbourne: Psych shoegazers Fierce Mild have just released a double A-side CD single and this young band are creating quite a buzz. They don't fit perfectly into the usual *Into The Void* list of bands but they have such a great sound that fans of psych and fuzz should check them out.

US: Doom pioneers Acid King are releasing their first album in ten years. *Middle Of Nowhere, Centre of Everywhere* will be out April 14 through Svart Records.

Norway: The Devil And The Almighty Blues will be releasing a new album Feb 16 through Blues For The Red Sun. Full of darkness, dirty rock, catchy grooves and, er... blues.

RECOMMENDATION

Italy: Stoner rockers Black Rainbows are releasing their fourth album *Hawkdope*, out through Heavy Psych Sounds. The band are known for their tight riffs and catchy hooks, think '70s Blue Cheer and Hawkwind meets '90s stoner rockers Kyuss and Monster Magnet. Available on CD and vinyl (gold, and violet and yellow splatter with alternate covers). Pre-sale is February 23, release date is March 14.



FOLLOW THE RAINBOW

'The Hunter'
@YouTube

LOOK WHO'S MOUNTING OUR COVER

If you bought this mag, you've probably noticed that there's a CD on the cover featuring a dozen of Australia's brightest rock and metal hopes. If you like what you hear, get to the bands' own pages and show them some support.

Of course, if you're reading this and your mag has no CD on the cover then you probably didn't buy it and just pinched your mate's copy.

Serves you right, cheapskate!

Chaos Divine

Progressive heavy rock
Perth, WA
chaosdivine.net

Inventions

Alternative rock
Melbourne, VIC
inventionsband.com

Voros

Death metal
Adelaide, SA
facebook.com/
vorosmetal

Lycanthia

Gothic/doom/death
metal
Sydney, NSW
lycanthia.com

Stray Dog Strut

Alternative metal
Adelaide, SA
facebook.com/
StrayDogStrutAdelaide

Bloodklot

Death metal
Perth, WA
facebook.com/
bloodklot666

Tensions Arise

Groove metal
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facebook.com/
tensionsarisemetal

Chainsaw Hookers

Rock
Perth, WA
facebook.com/
chainsawhookers

Kitties of Death

Avant-garde black metal
Australia/USA
facebook.com/
kittiesofdeath

The Nuremberg Code

Groove metal
Melbourne, VIC
thenurembergcode.com

The Spiral Sequence

Alternative/metal
Melbourne, VIC
thespiralsequence.com

Abreact

Hardcore/metal
Melbourne, VIC
abreacthc.com



PARROT MAGIC

A few things become apparent when you see King Parrot for the first time – Slatts will abuse you; Youngy will abuse you and throw water all over you then shoulder ride on someone or going running through the crowd abusing people all whilst screeching like a banshee; Ari will look at you like he's going to kill you; Squiz will be wearing short shorts; Toddy (and every past drummer) will amaze you with how easy they make it look; Toddy will also do windmills while drumming. I remember the first time I heard King Parrot. Steve from Heaven The Axe passed on a copy of *The Stench of Hardcore Pub Trash* for consideration on *Distortion*. This was right at the beginning, circa-2011. I listened to it through my laptop via Beats by Dre headphones. I sat stunned for a moment as the walls of my ear canals crumbled like dry toast then, when my brain caught up with what was happening, 'Epileptic Butcher' was finished. I hit the 'back' button on the media player and started it again. I first saw them live at The Bendigo Hotel. I can't remember who they opened for but I sure as shit remember their gig. I remember seeing Youngy

jump off stage, grab the few people who were there early and push them to the front of the stage, swearing at them whilst screeching lyrics. He then ran out into the beer garden, squealing in that high-pitched rasp of his; the juxtaposition of those squeals against his normally low speaking voice left me baffled – how the f**k does he do that? I was an instant fan. Now the world is starting to see the same things I did. Why am I highlighting this band when so many other Aussie bands are doing well overseas? Simply, no one else is doing what they are. Sure, there's the occasional comparison to GG Allin when people see Youngy go ape shit for the first time but the difference is Aussie humour. These guys epitomise the Aussie larrikin. Blokes just havin' a go, doing it their way and having a bloody good time doing it. It's infectious. Anyone who has said hello to the guys in the band know they are bloody lovely blokes, blokes who have gone from playing to 20 people at The Bendigo Hotel to opening for bands like Cattle Decapitated and Down. Can't wait for the new album.



Tune in to *Distortion* every Saturday night at 11pm-1am (Melbourne time) on MMM 105.1FM as Higgs spins the best in metal from around the country and the globe.

Words: Josh Voce

PIT DESTROYER

SETE STAR SEPT (JAP)

Experimental noise grind band from Japan, not for the faint of heart. Sete Star Sept are relentless in their touring and have visited Australian shores several times in the last few years, including an appearance at Australia's 2013 Obscene Extreme and a headline show at Melbourne's The Tote just last year. Continuing this trend, Sete Star Sept, a duo comprised of just one male and female, are heading back down to Australia for one select show in Adelaide. Like them on Facebook to keep up to date with their movements.



GO-ZEN (JAP)

If Dragonball Z had a character that was seriously disturbed, obsessed with gore and loved blast beats, it would probably be named Go-Zen. Fitting snugly into the genre defined as goregrind, Go-Zen unleash the carnage in an utmost Japanese fashion — cute anime cartoon characters ripping their own guts out. Death metal fans can probably find something to get into here; the pitch-shifted vocals over the mega crunchy guitar tones put Go-Zen in the realm of ultra-brutal. If you're a fan of collecting things from bands, I hope you've got deep pockets because Go-Zen have an extensive array of very cool merchandise, including hats, wristbands, beanies and even cycling lycra!

SULSA (SOUTH KOREA)

Meaning diarrhoea in Korean, Salsa sounds as messy and unpleasant as one might expect from a band with such a name. Recordings rawer than a still breathing cow, vocals on par with the intro to Cannibal Corpse's 'Meat Hook Sodomy' and an overall sick and twisted sound give Salsa their edge. Good to know a country as far out as South Korea are still capable of producing such monstrosities.

CHRISTF**K (SOUTH KOREA)

One of those bands that have to be seen to be believed. Christf**k have an energetic live show that can only be compared to Australia's own King Parrot. The music is furious punky-grind with solid riffs weaved all the way through. The singer doesn't spend much time on stage as he's too busy engaging the crowd with his leopard print briefs and spiky mohawk. If you happen to pass through South Korea, make sure it's to see these wild maniacs in action.

Sell yo'self

Aussie bands will do anything to get noticed.... and we have a column for that.



WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE GAVE YOU 30 SECONDS TO "SELL YO'SELF" TO OUR UNFORGIVING READERS?! WOULD YOU BE A BEST SELLER OR WOULD YOU WIND UP IN THE BARGAIN BIN? STEPPING ON THE SOAPBOX IS MELBOURNE'S I AM DUCKEYE. LET'S SEE WHAT THEY'VE GOT. GO!

"Tired of the same old riffs and structures?
Tired of being underwhelmed?

Tired of seeing a chorus a mile off and knowing the song will hold no new surprises, Mr. Grohl?

Well, keep those pajamas on because I Am Duckeye — "The Best In Entertainment" — are boasting absolutely nothing new!

Except for one thing; we sing about dicks... and a few other hot topics including doing poos, boobies, riffs, anal demons, head-butting children and getting stoned with garden gnomes!

Satisfied customers all across Australia who have seen I Am Duckeye in the flesh and those across the world who have seen them on ecstasy can't stop singing their praises for finally offering something a bit different, refreshing and without that smacky comedown.

Let's meet the qualified and helpful staff.

Classic Matt (Guitar): Spends upwards of 15 minutes a week working on new riffs.

Sam (Vocals/Guitar): Lives on an island and works on lyrics in between bouts of chronic masturbation.

Jewels (Bass): By far the best guitarist in the band, hence why he's on bass.

Sean (Drums): Overqualified but has difficulty getting work elsewhere due to "that incident".

Against all odds and a sense of decency, these four gentlemen have released two full-length albums, four EPs, numerous singles, have a live DVD in the works and have uploaded over 100 YouTube clips of inspired genius.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- In the same week that their music was banned from Triple J's Unearthed, their hit song 'Punching Dicks' was Rage's 'Clip Of The Week'.
- They won the national support for Andrew WK and then he decided not to tour;
- They were issued with a cease & desist order from a local council for a misinterpreted gig poster;
- They've run not one but two successful crowd funding campaigns.
- They were once banned from Facebook for 24 hours after Sam posted a picture of his balls wedged between two water bottles.

So next time you need to feel awesome, you need I Am Duckeye — "The Best In Entertainment".

And remember, GET TO A SHOW!

If you're in a band and you think you've got what it takes to 'sell yo'self', send an email into nick@heavymag.com.au

Words: Damo Musclicar Photo: Amanda Mason

Unveiling the Wicked



STRYPER

"Soldiers Under Command"
(Enigma Records, 1985)



GET STRYPED
'Soldiers Under Command'
@YouTube

I never really understood all the hate that Stryper got for being a Christian band. So many of metal's icons are believers in some sort of faith and don't cop the amounts of flack that this holy quartet did – Slayer's Tom Araya, Iron Maiden's Nicko McBrain, Megadeth's Dave Mustaine and Alice Cooper are all legends of metal who have religious beliefs, yet it's Stryper who are seen as a laughing stock. Well, my friends, I am here to help you put these prejudices aside.

Firstly, I am not religious at all. Secondly, I have never worn yellow and black or held samurai swords such as drummer Robert Sweet is doing on the back cover of this album but I have seen Stryper live and these guys brought it big time – they were extremely heavy and they delivered one kickass metal show and any non-believers and naysayers can suck it.

I picked this up in some smelly record store in Philadelphia for a measly \$3 and I have to say that it was worth it purely for the album's title track. With killer riffs and that classic '80s drum sound, it's the perfect opener for what's to come. Sure, the lyrics are super cheesy but so are Venom's so who cares, right?

Michael Sweet's vocals are on point and while his heart may be with God, his guitar work and the lead guitar work of Ox Fox, is nothing short of brutal. Seriously. Second track 'Makes Me Wanna Sing' is kind of hilarious in that the infectious chorus had me singing along and I kept finding myself laughing. 'Together Forever' is kinda generic and not one you'll be putting on your mix tape but it still has its fun moments.

It's not all good times on this album though as the follow-up ballad 'First Love' is so f**king terrible that it's actually vomit-inducing tripe. I highly recommend you lift the needle and skip to the galloping guitar work of 'The Rock That Makes Us Roll'. The title alone is so bad that you know it's going to rule and the song does indeed fit nicely alongside Helloween and the battle hymns of Manowar – a great anthemic way to finish side one.

Side two kicks off with 'Reach Out', so catchy and melodic with amazing Thin Lizzy-esque dual guitar licks and solos. In fact, it sounds heaps like RATT and that's never a bad thing. It's a killer tune and definitely my favourite on the album. Stryper pile on the awesomeness with '(Waiting For) A Love That's Real', which sounds like another disastrous power ballad but is a step into early Bon Jovi territory. Unfortunately for our ears, we are about to set foot into 'Together As One', another shitty ballad that the album could have done without so please lift the needle and skip right to 'Surrender', which is not a Cheap Trick cover. Instead it's a power metal heavy hitter that reminds you that, according to the lyrics, Jesus Christ is the lover of your soul. Well, I guess Stryper would know, being soldiers under command and everything. It has to be said that the guitar work here is flawless and I am surprised that these dudes never wind up on best guitarist lists because they seriously lay down the law when it comes to shredding. The album finishes with 'Battle Hymn Of The Republic (Glory, Glory Hallelujah)' which is so Manowar it's not funny. It's as though they turned a bible passage into a heavy metal anthem but I haven't read the bible so I wouldn't know.

Soldier's Under Command, the band's follow up to their 1984 debut *The Yellow And Black Attack* is a great slab of traditional '80s metal. Sure it has two completely awful ballads but the rest is pretty damn good. How this band continuously got overlooked was a travesty. Surprisingly Stryper are still going strong today. Their 2013 release *No More Hell To Pay* is a complete ball-tearer filled with incredible guitar work and enough strong songs to force those who dismissed Stryper to pay some respect to the band's never-give-up attitude for both heavy music and their religion. Props to Stryper for fighting the world for the right to play, fighting for metal because it's here to stay. Lay down your souls to the god's rock n roll.

Oh, the irony.

MARDUK

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EYE OF PROVIDENCE

OUT: 27.02.15

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OTHERWISE

PEACE AT ALL COSTS

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HEAVY RECOMMENDS

THE PALE EMPEROR BY Marilyn Manson

COOKING VINYL

Industrial rock/metal
Ohio, USA
marilynmanson.com

Review: Sofie Marsden

Marilyn Manson is a musician known to all, sacred to millions, and despised by many. No matter your opinion of the man and his music, Manson has indisputably had a lasting effect on modern rock music throughout his illustrious career. 2015 sees the release of his ninth studio album and his best release in over a decade.

The Pale Emperor returns to the sounds that made Manson famous – the industrial influences, particularly on album highlight 'Deep Six', are back with a vengeance; the groovy drums, à la 'The Beautiful People', make a triumphant return on 'The Mephistopheles Of Los Angeles'; and, as always, Manson's haunting voice leads the music to the most depraved places of the listener's mind.

The previous three Marilyn Manson releases each featured decent songs but failed to make a mark because they lacked the

catchy hooks of earlier albums. *The Pale Emperor* hits back at full force, with some of the most fun and memorable music Manson has ever made.

Second single from the album, 'Deep Six', features all the hallmarks of the rocker's trademark style. It's exactly the kind of song you can picture thousands of fans rocking out to at a live show, which is exactly what you want from a Marilyn Manson song. It's heavy, it's melodic, it's decadent and, most of all, it shows just how far Manson has come in the last fifteen years. Returning to his roots doesn't mean rehashing old ground but embracing the best parts of his older music and injecting it into his new, more mature sound.

Throughout, the album flows flawlessly and feels like a complete work of art. The deluxe edition of *'The Pale Emperor'* features bonus acoustic versions of three tracks but even without the extras, this album stands out as being the best work Manson has done in a very long time.

It certainly sets the bar for the rest of the rock world in 2015.



BOW DOWN

'Deep Six'
@YouTube



BEYOND THE RED MIRROR BY Blind Guardian

NUCLEAR BLAST

Symphonic power metal
Krefeld, West Germany
blind-guardian.com

Review: Carl Neumann

Germany's Blind Guardian is one of the undisputed heavyweights of power metal. If you like them, you love them and agree everything they have created thus far is beyond spectacular. Since '88, BG have released a series of progressively magnificent albums, each time growing with bigger choirs and orchestras, which is what makes this breed of fantasy power metal so powerful. On this latest atonement, *Beyond the Red Mirror*, BG have upped the ante, working with three different choirs from Budapest, Prague and Boston and enlisting two orchestras consisting of 90 members each.

While I like this album, I do feel it's possibly gone a bit too far. Hansi Kürsch's vocals disappear amongst the ambitious baritones and lustrous violins, and the guitars blend a little too much with all the other instruments and almost-cinematic yet still operatic vocals. Casting that aside, these songs played live are going to sound fantastic.



PUNCH THE SKY

'Twilight of the Gods'
@YouTube



SEARCHING FOR ZERO BY Cancer Bats

COOKING VINYL

Hardcore, punk, metal
Toronto, Canada
cancerbats.com

Review: Michelle O'Rance

Searching for Zero is the fifth album from Canada's favourite sons of hardcore metal the Cancer Bats. It's been a long three years since the last release but the time between albums has done nothing to mellow the sound that the foursome creates.

Searching for Zero has succeeded in bringing together all the best elements of the Cancer Bats, from raw punk to heavier elements soaked in boundless energy. It is a more mature effort and definitely moves in the right direction for the band.

Produced by Ross Robinson (Slipknot, Sepultura, At The Drive-In), the recording is dirtier and seems more lo-fi than previous Cancer Bats releases but this encapsulates the group's live sound. This sound is why they are known and to nail it on record is quite an achievement. There is much focus on slower, more melodic tunes this time around as well but the savage screams emitting from vocalist Liam Cormier ensure the brutality and raw energy behind the music are still very much in play. Recommended.



FLAP THOSE WINGS

'Satellites'
@YouTube



FRONTSCHEIN BY Marduk

CENTURY MEDIA

Black metal
Norrköping, Sweden
marduk.nu

Review: Nathan Eden

The thirteenth full-length effort from Sweden's black metal wizards Marduk proves the band's longevity and relevance to the genre. Marduk achieves this not only by simply existing after all this time but also because its latest effort is every bit as intense as their very first demo EP *F*ck Me Jesus*, which was banned in several countries upon its release in 1991.

The melody-meets-malice of the opening title track introduces the album's curious knack for showcasing tunes built on key ingredients such as buzzing tremolo and blast beats, and yet it remains – dare I say it – accessible. There are a few mid-tempo moments such as 'Nebelwerfer' and 'The Blond Beast', the latter of which carries a drum beat to which you could almost dance. Almost.

It is in the darkness of full-paced frenzy of tracks such as 'Afrika' and the vicious 'Thousand-Fold Death' where Marduk truly reign, aided by vocalist Mortuus, who sounds perpetually on the verge of passing away from a fatal injury.



DIE TO IT

'Frontschwein'
@YouTube

THE HEAVY MAG ANDROID APP IS LIVE & GET THE APPLE MAC VERSION FROM iTunes



HEAVY





KILL THEM... ALL

BY The Kill

BLASTASFUK

Grindcore

Melbourne, Australia

blastasfuk.bandcamp.com

Review: Sam Bean

Grind legends The Kill take a break from releasing splits with every other band on the planet to release their third full-length, graduating from poaching album lyrics to album titles.

It's shocking how much violence is crammed into each track. Drummer Jay and his jackhammer foot have somehow sped up and the tempo is blistering – check out 'Holiday's Over'. Nik's vocals are more punk and there's hints of crusty grind. Don't let the word 'crusty' fool you though; the production is modern and powerful. Guitarist Roby rips out some solos that may upset the purists. Forget 'brutal' bands with random songs and gurgly vocals, The Kill are precise and angry. I love it.

There's broad wit running through the album from the song titles, the cover tracks, and the references to other bands – the PE sample in 'Burn Craigieburn Burn'. This keeps it from being some impenetrable scene in-joke. Want to know where grindcore is at in 2015? Start here.



BE KILLED

'Heavy Metal Professional'
@Bandcamp



DORMANT HEART

BY Sylosis

NUCLEAR BLAST

Modern metal

Reading, England

sylosis.com

Review: Patrick Warnes

Modern metal band Sylosis hit the mark again with a complex approach that dabbles in thrash, metalcore and melodeath. *Dormant Heart* is the UK band's fourth release and the album seldom lets you get comfortable, always punching out something new when you least expect it. This is what sets Sylosis apart from the more mainstream metal acts. Opener 'Where the Wolves Come to Die' is a fine example of this, starting off with a progressive, slow tempo intro that builds into an unexpected melodeath-inspired track.

This is a solid album filled with beautiful moments; however, *Dormant Heart* is plagued by moments of uninspired and repetitious thrash riffage that weighs it down a bit, ultimately making it tougher to absorb from start to finish. Vocalist Josh Middleton adds to this repetition, sounding monotone throughout, except in the rare moments his clean vocals are used.

A hard work ethic and a willingness to experiment gets Sylosis over the line.



BEAT THAT HEART

'Where the Wolves Come to Die'
@Spotify



EYE OF PROVIDENCE

BY The Agonist

CENTURY MEDIA

Melodic death metal

Montreal, Canada

facebook.com/TheAgonistOfficial

Review: Michelle O'Rance

The Agonist are back with their hotly-anticipated new release *Eye Of Providence*.

Featuring their new vocalist Vicky Psarakis, the album starts off a little tentatively but soon warms up to show off the new direction that the band have embraced.

There is more melodic singing on the album than the previous releases and the music has a much heavier feel with a slightly slower tempo. None of this is bad but it definitely feels like The Agonist are out to prove something to their critics. Do they? Well, yes. The band have the goods to be one of the greats. Simply, there is more passion in their music on this release and, while it may disappoint some older fans, it will most certainly open the door to a wider audience.

'The Perfect Embodiment' is one such track that is an awesome example of their new direction. There is some fantastic guitar work and it shows the range Psarakis' pipes can produce. This is definitely an album worth checking out.



FOLLOW THE PATH

'Disconnect Me'
@YouTube

ALBUM OF THE ISSUE



PSYCROPTIC

BY Psycroptic

PROSTHETIC RECORDS

Technical death metal

Hobart, Australia

prostheticrecords.com

Review: Steve Jenkins

Aussie tech-death veterans Psycroptic are back with their latest offering and, as expected, it is filled with head-banging riffs, furious drum work and a vicious vocal.

Following the dissonant intro of opening track 'Echoes to Come', things get fast and furious. Joe Haley's signature guitar sound spilling out single-note legato riff after riff atop a canopy of Dave Haley's bone-shattering beats. It's a combination that has given Psycroptic an immediately recognizable and unique signature sound.

Throughout this eponymous release, Psycroptic effortlessly create a landscape of despair and desolation. They may not deviate too far from the usual path but some differences are immediately noticeable. Jason Peppiatt's vocals have long been known for alternating between low growls and higher shrill-sounding screams but here he's found a mid

range yell that is definitely new territory. This latest trick appears in the choruses of 'Echoes to Come' and 'Endings', its use in the latter so starkly contrasting Peppiatt's usual style that it had me thinking of Chuck Schuldiner.

As it continues, the album takes a number of twists and turns – 'A Soul Once Lost' is a return to the early staccato riffing of *The Scepter of the Ancients*; 'Cold' introduces with a gorgeously delicate flamenco-esque flourish; 'Setting the Skies Ablaze' is a balls-out speedfest with a barking hardcore vocal reminiscent of early '90s Aussie metal; and 'Sentence of Immortality' chants in a Gojira fashion over harmonic rhythms.

There's more diversity here than I can remember on any Psycroptic album previous, and that's either gonna excite or annoy fans. It isn't an album that grabs you straight away but this is also an album bound to reveal more of itself over time so I still expect I might find what I'm seeking after a few more listens. Strong stuff indeed.



STAND IN AWE

'Echoes to Come'
@YouTube



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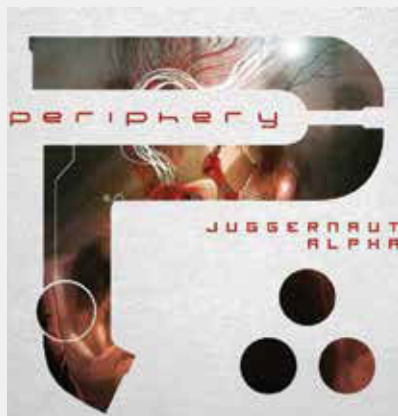
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THE FIRST CHAPTER

JUGGERNAUT: ALPHA BY Periphery

ROADRUNNER

Progressive metal
Marylands, USA
www.periphery.net

Review: Matt Doria

Juggernaut marks a vital turning point in Periphery's course; it's the first time the prog-metal sextet have collaborated together in every facet of the recording process, and essentially the first record where all members are content with how the project materialised. *Juggernaut*'s split into two halves – the airy, malleable *Alpha* (which we're focusing on here) and the dangerous, furious *Omega*.

As it should surprise no one, Periphery's decision to attack the project entirely themselves has led to a record with a healthier, more rounded sound. Things are a lot less capricious and rigid as they were on *Periphery* and *Periphery II* but the progressive powerhouse are still wildly outgoing and unafraid to tilt some heads. Whereas its *Omega* counterpart is all heaviness all the time, *Alpha* spends a great deal of its sixty-minute runtime

fiddling around with quirks like death metal breakdowns and pop punk vocals, sometimes even in the same song! Bouts of chiptune, elevator music and even orchestral elements swing near and far on *Alpha*, proving that Periphery are as willing as ever to experiment and take risks. This can prove to be a gripe at times, however, when the record veers into lighter territory. As fans will agree, there's an indescribable feeling of warmth that resonates with Spencer Sotello's growls but those lucrative bellows are few and far on *Alpha*. This is the album where he lets his soul voice shine, and the problem here is that his cleans are too cloyingly sweet, like they'd fare better pasted onto some Top-40 bubblegum pop. In the grand scheme of things, Sotello's effeminate over-expression is a small detractor from an otherwise flawless expedition. This is the Periphery we know and love with a breath of fresh air.



TAKE THE PLUNGE
'The Scourge'
@YouTube



FROM THE NORTH BY Raised Fist

EPITAPH

Hardcore punk
Luleå, Sweden
raisedfist.com

Review: Callum Doig

Swedish hardcore quintet Raised Fist have returned to clench their fists and swing out a right hook of new material they've titled *From the North*. It's the band's first album since their 2009 release *Veil of Ignorance* and fans will be pleased to know that Raised Fist haven't changed too much; however, the direction they took with *From the North* has made them stand out a lot more by merging old school '80s punk riffs with modern sounding fretwork, and all fitting perfectly with Alexander Hagman's wrathfully ecstatic vocals. If there are any tracks that define Raised Fist's lunacy on this album, I'd say that 'Flow', 'Depression', 'Gates' and 'Unsinkable' are the ones that will cause listeners to unleash all hell without giving a single f**k.

I raise my fist in approval of this fine piece of hardcore punk!



ROCK OUT
'Flow'
@YouTube



FROM THE VERY DEPTHS BY VENOM

SPINEFARM

Metal
Newcastle, UK
venomslegions.com

Review: Damo Musclicar

You know you're in for good times when Venom drop a new album. Their first album since 2011's *Fallen Angels* and the Newcastle trio have delivered an absolute blinder. Solid production, kickass songs and surprisingly-flawless performances make Venom's 14th studio album a tough contender for album of the year. Mixing their 'zero f**ks given' punk attitude with an overload of heavy riffs, Cronos' signature vocals growl their way through songs about the death of rock'n'roll, their punk attitudes and, of course, the mythology of Satanism and the occult. While many other bands today may be 'heavier' in terms of their music, there's no denying Venom's place in metal. It was they who, alongside Norwegian Vikings Bathory, kickstarted an entire genre. Regardless of the extremely clichéd lyrics, *From the Very Depths* has set the standard for metal albums of 2015 and it's going to be hard to top.



INJECT SOME VENOM
'Long Haired Punks'
@YouTube



THE ORDER OF THINGS BY All That Remains

RAZOR & TIE/COOKING VINYL

Rock
Massachusetts, USA
allthatremainsonline.com

Review: Alex Sievers

When All That Remains frontman Philip Labonte stated that their last record, *A War You Cannot Win*, "sucked", many thought the band would return to the sound of their early days. *The Order of Things* definitely tries to retrace the band's steps but doesn't quite go all the way. The heavier moments of the quintet's early days are definitely there but really only on 'No Knock' and 'Tru-Kvlt-Metal'. The generic metal style of recent years that they have been incorporating into their music is still prevalent, meaning this doesn't tick all the boxes for being truly great.

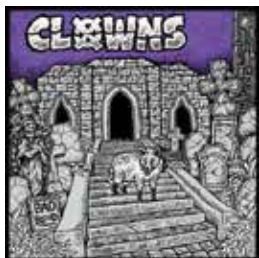
There are still highlights however, namely the truly awesome 'Pernicious'. This exemplifies the band's recent direction the best – Labonte's powerful vocals, bassist Jeanne Sagan's clean singing, tight riffs and drumming, and a flare for the sonically dynamic and appropriately melodic.

Exclude this winning track and *The Order of Things* becomes a solid but ultimately safe and unremarkable record.



FIND WHAT REMAINS
'No Knock'
@YouTube





BAD BLOOD

BY Clowns

POISON CITY RECORDS

🎧 Hardcore, punk
📍 Melbourne, Australia
🌐 facebook.com/clownsband

Review: Patrick Emmett

While a lot of people have some stupid 'phobia' of clowns, these hardcore punks from Melbourne are a bunch of clowns who wouldn't scare anyone unless, of course, all forms of heavy music scare you, in which case you probably aren't reading this magazine. Clowns are a band that, despite their aggressiveness, you can listen to with a smile on your face and always be in the mood to have fun. Their high-energy music makes you want to pick up a skateboard and ride your neighbourhood or it reminds you of a childhood spent playing Tony Hawk video games to the best soundtracks ever, like this reviewer.

Overall, Clowns' second album *Bad Blood* walks the line of punk perfection. From its fun-loving two-minute hardcore-punk jams to the occasional bursts of powerviolence, this is a 10 out of 10 record, especially when you add the 11-minute riff-heaven closing song. The year just began and already I can see this being a favourite of 2015 for me.



GET IN THE CAR

'Figure It Out'
@YouTube



CHAPTER AND VERSE

BY Funeral For A Friend

DISTILLER / ROADRUNNER

🎧 Post hardcore, emo
📍 Brigend, Wales
🌐 funeralforafriend.com

Review: Will Oakeshott

Released 12 years ago, *Casually Depressed And Deep In Conversation* made Funeral For A Friend the prized band in the post hardcore world. What followed has been a destructive and massive identity crisis thanks to misguided major label input and nine member changes.

Chapter And Verse pursues the statement made by 2013's *Conduit* of a more melodic hardcore approach. Opener 'Stand By Me for the Millionth Time' is a nod of respect to Touché Amoré and 'Modern Excuses Of A Man' and easily the fastest song FFAF have written and one that could have been from Defeater's handbook.

There are a few curveballs – acoustic track 'Brother' is unexpected but enjoyable; and single 'Pencil Pusher' is an excellent amalgamation of multiple genres.

Are FFAF just trying to be relevant with these last two albums? Possibly, but their music is still very invigorating.



HIT THE FUNERAL

'Pencil Pusher'
@YouTube



EMBRYO

BY Embryo

LOGICILLOGIC

🎧 Death metal
📍 Cremona, Italy
🌐 embryo-online.com

Review: Matt Bolton

Italy sure does produce some great metal bands and you can add the mighty Embryo to that list, their third album proving they are a force with which to be reckoned. Recorded, mixed and mastered by Simone Mularoni at Domination Studios, San Marino, Embryo get a top-notch sound.

Vocalist Roberto Pasolini gives us death growls and screams of which any metalhead would be proud while Eugenio Sambasile on guitar provides some memorable riffs, throwing infectious solos in along the way – 'Insane Lucidity', my personal favourite, and also in 'The End Of The Beginning.' Stomping riffs in heavy hitter 'Fragments of Utopia' will have you banging your heads. The use of keyboards by Simone Solla is welcoming, giving a gothic, industrial feel and drummer extraordinaire, Francesco Paoli (Fleshgod Apocalypse) lends a helping hand behind the kit and does a brilliant job. Alongside him, Nicola Iazzi belts away on the bass. Embryo stands apart from other death metal bands by steering clear of the same old formula.



ENTER THE EMBRYO

'An Awkward Attempt'
@YouTube

THE SECOND CHAPTER



JUGGERNAUT: OMEGA

BY Periphery

ROADRUNNER

🎧 Progressive metal
📍 Maryland, USA
🌐 periphery.net

Review: Billy Geary

While part of the same overarching story, the second half to Periphery's *Juggernaut* double album is somewhat of a different beast. Darker, grittier, considerably heavier songwriting is the order of the day on *Omega* – something sure to please fans of Periphery's debut record.

'Reprise' serves as a link back to *Alpha*, joining the two parts of the story together by re-visiting some of the lyrics and melodies from *Alpha* before descending into the riff-fest of 'The Bad Thing'. This is a track that signals the trend for *Omega* – it's big, dark and heavy whilst still retaining the band's inherent catchiness. Coupled with Spencer Sotelo in guttural mode, the down-tuned guitars and bass of 'Hell Below' suggest that's exactly where this song was written. It's pure evil and, without a doubt, the heaviest song Periphery have ever written.

Clocking in at 11 minutes,

the title track is Periphery's first long song since 'Racecar' and it is every bit as epic. '*Omega*' goes through a number of movements, swirling between moments of brutality and beauty before returning to the chorus of '*Alpha*', albeit beefed up. '*Omega*' isn't just for Periphery's brutal side though, with 'Priestess' seeing the band tread new ground by pairing Sotelo's vocals with layers of acoustic guitars.

Importantly, Periphery no longer feels like three guys trying to out-riff each other. Instead, songwriting is at the forefront thanks in no small part to Sotelo's ear for a melody. Nevertheless, there is still plenty of fodder on *Omega* for the tech-heads amongst Periphery's fan base, particularly on the title track and 'The Bad Thing.' Overall, *Juggernaut* is a huge step forward for the band and whilst they do make you work for it, this will prove to be some of the best music released in 2015.



KEEP IT GOING

'The Bad Thing'
@YouTube

THE CRUSHING DEBUT ALBUM FROM AUSTRALIA'S FRESHEST DEATH METAL BAND

Dæmon Pyre

PRODUCED BY SHANE EDWARDS (THY ART IS MURDER, NORTHLANE)

MASTERED BY JENS BOGREN (AT THE GATES, KREATOR, AMON AMARTH)

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NEW JUSTICE RECORDS

Words: Carl Neumann Photos: Glen La Ferman

KILLER BE KILLED

ONE IN, ALL IN

Soundwave is just around the corner and Killer Be Killed are heading this way to play their first-ever shows. Greg Puciatto and Max Cavalera chat with Carl Neumann about how four luminaries of the metal world checked their egos at the door and made one of the most talked about records of 2014.

Greg Puciatto is slurping noisily on a pomegranate icypole from his home in the United States.

"This is how you know when you need to go to the grocery store; when you look in the f**kin' refrigerator and go, 'Is there anything I can eat here?' and there is nothing left but popsicles and you're eating them one after the other."

He laughs loudly, warmly. He's in a good mood and why not? Killer Be Killed, the side-project that the Dillinger Escape Plan frontman formed with Troy Sanders, Max Cavalera and Dave Elitch has struck a tremendous chord with metal fans everywhere. So much so that the reception has inspired the band to shift from a recording project to live touring... and first stop is Australia!

"We couldn't be more excited to play our first shows ever in Australia – we are so f**kin' psyched. We are going to be the most excited people there. I think we are going to self-combust!" Puciatto beams, indicating that the decision to launch the live show here has much to do with the commercial support Killer Be Killed has received in this metal-crazed country.

"Record sales in Australia gave us our highest chart position – number 40 or something – and [we all felt] the first place that we play should be where the people bought our record the most," chimes in heavy metal demigod Max Cavalera.

"It's all really surprising to me," Puciatto continues. "We are in a different country [than Australia], and I have very little idea what is going on over there – I don't really read a lot or look at any media sites and I'm a bit surprised that anyone even knows who we are!"

Avoiding the papers is one thing but Puciatto would've found it impossible to ignore the reception he's received on tours to Australia with Dillinger.

"In Dillinger Escape Plan, we really wanted to go to Australia and so we paid for everything with our own credit cards as we had no means of getting there," he says. "We put ourselves in debt to go and if no-one had cared we would have just been up shit creek but from the very first time, Australians have really embraced us and we have found that still to be true over the years."



Puciato speaks fondly about the recognisable passion of Aussie fans, which he believes distinguishes Australia from scenes around the world.

"There's a certain culture in Australia, where the music is really a cultural driving force," he explains. "It's not just a commodity the way it's become in the United States. In Australia, music still seems very important to the people and music is still kind of regarded as meaning something. Troy and Max feel the same way."

Killer Be Killed's eponymous debut album clocks in just over 45 minutes so it's with some bemusement that they've been allocated a full hour at Soundwave. Cavalera seems as unsure as everyone else about how the band will fill such time.

"I don't know, I have to talk to the guys," he says. "I'd like to do it [perform] in the order of the album. I've never actually played a whole record myself, not in Sepultura or Soulfly. Maybe we can play a couple of cover songs like 'Ace of Spades' [Motörhead] and [something by] Bad Brains and even end it with a medley of a Soulfly song, a Mastodon song and a Dillinger Escape Plan song all rolled into one," he laughs. "That will be a great ending for the live set but it's a democratic band so we have to see what the other guys vote." With such a wide range of influences and styles, the album was always going to be a melting pot of ideas.

"What's cool about it [the album] is the mix of raw, beauty, dirtiness and cleanliness," Cavalera continues. "You get a lot of that contrast in this record, going from something melodic and beautiful to something heavy and nasty. The whole album has a feeling of coherence. It feels really good from the beginning to the end. I've got favourite tracks like 'Curb Crusher', 'Facedown', 'I.E.D.' and 'Forbidden Fire' but I love playing the whole thing – it's going to be a blast playing the whole record."

Cavalera indicates that the guys are all painfully aware of the high hopes fans have for the band's first appearances and that much work is involved in meeting those expectations.

"We are really going to have to put the pedal to the metal and figure out the set, learn the whole record and a couple of extra songs so that we can have an hour of material," he says, adding that fans can expect it to be fast, chaotic and heavy. "There is so much energy on the record. Some of the stuff is made for the mosh pit, man, so there is going to be some madness going on when we play those songs live." ►►



BE KILLED

'I.E.D.'
@YouTube

"Every single thing that we did – and this is what made it take so f**kin' long to actually do – we did in the same room together. Even when we were recording, we were all there every day, from noon to midnight for a month-and-a-half straight."



“When I listen to that record... I hear the fun of us all in the room, all feeling like little kids together while we were playing. I haven’t had that feeling of ‘anything goes’ since I was 15!”

Perhaps the most interesting dynamic in this so-called ‘supergroup’ is that three of the members are actually frontmen in their respective bands. Surely balancing such strong personalities has been challenging and one wonders what it would have been like in the studio during production of such a beast record.

“You know what, man? The recording went incredibly

smoothly. You wouldn’t think that you could bring people into a room without everyone bringing their egos and I definitely thought it was going to be hard,” Puciato says. “I thought that Max was going to be the hardest to work with because he has pretty much been the boss of everything since Sepultura; he hasn’t really been in a band where he hasn’t been the ultimate authority.”

Cavalera nods, indicating just how much he likes it that way. “Unofficially, because I have more experience, I was in charge of the riffs so I wrote 90 per cent of the riffs and played all of the rhythm guitar on the album,” he declares victoriously before diplomatically adding, “and Troy and Greg helped a lot too!”

From the outset, the guys were each determined to make sure the project was written in an open and transparent environment where all ideas were welcome and where the workload was evenly spread, something that could only be achieved by assigning certain rules of collaboration, according to Puciato.

“I didn’t want to lay down tracks, send them back and forth and then have someone put it all together – that’s not a collaboration; that’s just protecting egos,” he says determinedly. “That’s really just hiding behind distance and being like ‘Well, I’m gonna do whatever I want and I’m going to send it off and this guy can’t change it.’ There’s nothing exciting about that.

To avoid this, the band wrote songs organically, the old-fashioned way, gathering together in the rehearsal space to write and record over a couple of months. The approach seems super surprising given the demanding nature of each member’s other commitments but Puciato stresses that this unity was crucial in

EGOS BE KILLED

Words: Matt Doria

Killer Be Killed may be a free-flowing creative collaborative without rules but so many strong personalities in a studio for weeks on end might be a recipe for a clashing of egos. Guitarist and vocalist Max Cavalera explains how the band avoided such situations.

“Egos were not allowed in our studio,” laughs Max Cavalera, one quarter of Killer Be Killed. “Actually, we had a sign on the door saying, ‘No rock stars!’”

“Yeah, there was none of that [egos], man,” adds Greg Puciato, who also handles vocals and guitar in the band. “We established early that if we are making this record we need to treat it as if every one of our bands doesn’t exist and be completely willing to just say every f***ing idea we thought and not feel the need to validate ourselves.”

It was helpful that the band members – including Troy Sanders of Mastodon and ex-The Mars Volta drummer Dave Elitch – were all able to let their extensive histories do the talking.

“The fact that we were there and working together meant that we had already accomplished and done whatever we needed to do to be creatively validated,” Puciato continues. “We wouldn’t be in the room if we didn’t respect each other creatively, so we just went, ‘Let’s get our hand dirty and start writing.’”

Truthfully, according to Cavalera, the personalities in the band aren’t as large as people might think.

“We are all guys that love music and we are not into the rock-star trip. We all come from different styles – Mastodon is very different, Dillinger Escape Plan is very different and so is Soulfly – but we all agree that none of us are rockstars and none of us have that type of personality.”

For this, we can be grateful for we may not now be enjoying what was clearly one of the albums of 2014 if it weren’t the case.



ensuring the songs had the right energy.

"There wasn't a single file sent – not one single file or mp3 was ever sent! There isn't one f**kin' email that has Killer Be Killed attached and that was really important to me.

"I'm not really interested in just putting shit out. I don't have any sort of checklist where I can just cross it out – 'done' – you know? I actually like growing as musician; I like writing, and I like getting my hands dirty so I didn't want it to be just a collaboration on paper. Every single thing that we did – and this is what made it take so f**kin' long to actually do – we did in the same room together. Even when we were recording, we were all there every day, from noon to midnight for a month-and-a-half straight."

How the hell was that? According to Puciato, a truly collaborative free-for-all:

"We were changing the songs while we were recording them; we were deciding who would sing while we were recording vocals. Every instrument was mic'd and set up at the same time so if we decided two-thirds of the way through a song, 'Oh, Max sang this part before but I actually think that it would be better if Troy sang that part,' we could just change it on the fly – it made it all really exciting."

The result helped the band to achieve a certain creative chaos that was unbridled and almost uncontrollable. In fact, they bounced ideas off each other often, changing songs so frequently that they found themselves re-recording parts repeatedly.

"Instead of me tracking for just two or three days and taking a break and then Max tracking for two or three days, I would do a

vocal, come out of the booth and Troy would say, 'What you just did made me completely rethink what I was gonna do. Let me get in there real quick.' Of course, once he did that I would say, 'Oh, shit, now that you did that I have to go back in and change mine because what you did was f**kin' awesome and now mine sounds like shit!' Puciato recalls.

"The one thing, that I really thought was going to be important was that we were [each] going to sing on every song," he adds. "I didn't want it to be like, 'Here's a Troy song, here's a Greg song, here's a Max song.' That's not what I wanted it to be; that's just uninteresting to me. I felt like the only way for it to be exciting was to have every single person be on every song."

Does Puciato feel they achieved that excitement?

"When I listen to that record, I don't know what other people hear but I hear the fun of us all in the room, all feeling like little kids together while we were playing. I haven't had that feeling of 'anything goes' since I was 15!"

Cavalera is so pleased with the result he closes the interview with the bold declaration that the world needs more supergroups.

"This is what happens when you mix these bands together and make an album," he says. "Hopefully, there will be more of these kinds of groups popping out in the world – I'd like to see more of that, you know. We had Nailbomb and Murder Construct but I would like to see more [supergroups]. It is an idea that is really cool and different to anything else [we're doing] and fans over there [in Australia] get to see us in a different environment than our normal bands. It's quite exciting, I think." **H**





Words: Matt Doria Photo: J. Saffer

PERIPHERY

ALPHA & OMEGA

It's been a long time coming for Periphery's colossal concept project *Juggernaut*. Leading man Misha Mansoor chats to Matt Doria about how the experimental prog-metal sextet flipped their story-driven fantasy into an erratic reality.

Following over five years of hard work and endless cries from impatient fans, Periphery's aptly-titled concept piece *Juggernaut* is finally out in the open. Bringing their pride and joy to the shelves has been a bumpy road for the prog-metal legends native to Washington, DC. As leading man and axe slasher Misha 'Bulb' Mansoor explains, *Juggernaut* was originally slated as Periphery's debut album.

"We decided against that because of all of the line-up troubles that we were having [in the beginning] and we just wanted to have an album out," Mansoor begins, pointing towards the turbulent expedition that led to their 2010 self-titled release. "We didn't have time to get it done during the [*Periphery II*] cycle either, so this time we took the time that we actually needed to get it done."

In the years between *Juggernaut*'s inception and its completion, the project experienced more than its fair share of shifts and shuffles.

"It's changed about as much as it could change," Mansoor admits.

As the band gained experience and alternated their line-up, the overall vision for the project evolved, both musically and in terms of its self-progressive story.

"I think that based on where we are now, we want to make something that makes sense to us," he clarifies.

Most bands wait until their masterpiece is finished to unveil it but Periphery took a different approach, announcing the *Juggernaut* project when it was just a draft some years back. At the time, *Periphery II* was still surfing along. Why the *Juggernaut* title stuck when its concept was

thrown around so much comes down to fan service or perhaps band mis-service.

"We could have called it something else, but I think the problem was that, philosophically, *Juggernaut* was just always going to be our concept album. If we had just put it out and hadn't called it *Juggernaut*, people would have been like 'Okay, cool. So when's *Juggernaut* coming out?'" Mansoor laughs.

Mansoor talks about the antecedent years in Periphery's path with some pride – how the band's experiences have influenced the development of *Juggernaut* and what impact their past had on the record's emergence.

"*Periphery* was something that I did mostly myself in my living room," Mansoor unravels. "That was never the goal; I've always wanted a band that I can collaborate with. I'd much rather share the record with a bunch of other people."

As he explains, taking control of the record was the only way it could be completed, the band's line-up issues often getting in the way of their collaborative focus.

When it came to 2012's *Periphery II*, Mansoor has a 'We don't talk about that anymore' attitude.

"I'm not really happy with the way that album sounds. It sounds fine but it doesn't sound like I wanted it to sound. I'm sure the rest of the guys have their qualms with how that album sounds," he states.

Explaining why the record plays sour, he continues:

"I'm relieved that we don't need to work on *Juggernaut* anymore," he admits. "We were stressing out over attention to detail and everything and I'm just really happy that we ended up with something that I feel lives up to the standards that we had hoped for initially."

"*Periphery II* was more of a step in that [collaborative] direction but we ended up working with an engineer on that record and that's when we learned if we work with an engineer, they might not really understand the sound that we're going for."

Three years later, the six-piece were determined to approach the process differently. "We decided to do everything ourselves on *Juggernaut*. Adam ['Nolly' Netgood] is an extremely talented mixing engineer and we all produced and wrote the record collaboratively for the first time – that was awesome."

It certainly shines through. While their first two albums are undoubtedly original, *Periphery* have loosened up a little more on *Juggernaut*.

"Realising that goal, finally, with Nolly at the helm and everyone happy with the mix and the way their parts sound, I feel like we've finally captured the sound that we wanted all along," Mansoor continues.

"I think the main thing was the fact that it's a concept album and we could operate in the framework of an album, rather than a song," he says of the increased experimentation on *Juggernaut*. *Periphery* have always been known for their effect-laden production but both the *Alpha* and

Omega parts of *Juggernaut* crank that dial to 11.

"With things that needed to relate to the story directly, we were pushed to think about the music differently than we normally would. That's really the reason why we made it [*Juggernaut*], because we wanted to force ourselves into a framework where we weren't using the same approach to songwriting that we normally would," Mansoor says. "That led to a lot of experimentation because everything's supposed to be a lot more cinematic and more theatrical."

At the end of the day, *Juggernaut* isn't just a monster of an album. From unfolding the record's story to using their real-world experiences to shape its augmentation, *Juggernaut* has been a demon of a project for *Periphery*, and Mansoor lets out an exasperated sigh at its completion.

"I'm happy and I'm relieved that we don't need to work on *Juggernaut* anymore," he admits. "It was so hyped up for the band [as well as audiences], and we just really wanted to do a good job on it. We were stressing out over attention to detail and everything and I'm just really happy that we ended up with something that I feel lives up to the standards that we had hoped for initially."

While both parts of *Juggernaut* have been enjoying rave reviews and widespread fan approval, followers shouldn't hold their breath for a follow-up anytime soon.

"I don't know, man. This was a very time consuming project!" laughs a hesitant Mansoor when confronted with the idea of a sequel. Alluding to *Periphery*'s tendency to make insurmountably long records, he finishes up: "We should set a challenge for ourselves to make an album that's, like, fifteen minutes long." **H**

KEEPING THINGS FRESH

Words: Matt Doria

There's no argument that *Periphery* are one of the most unique forces in the music industry today so one has to wonder how they are able to repeatedly defy the laws of music and come up with erratically-unexampled tunes time and time again?

On this, founding guitarist Misha Mansoor drops his truth bomb.

"I have some friends who are like 'You should only make music if it's original.' While I don't think there's anything wrong with that being your goal, it has never been ours. Our goal has always just been to write stuff that we like. We're not concerned about how that turns out," he says.

"I'm sure some people think we're the most generic band in the world and some people will say we're unlistenable but we don't concern ourselves with that. We're not writing this music to please anyone or to get good reviews or even to make money because we sure as hell wouldn't be putting out a progressive concept album if we wanted to make money!"

"We all really enjoy writing music, and we enjoy writing the music that we like, and that we would be stoked to play live, and stoked to have represent us. That's really all there is to it; it doesn't matter if that's generic, or original, or whatever."





Words: Matt Doria Photo: David Jackson

STEEL PANTHER PAID TO PARTY

Steel Panther have become huge singing about sex and they owe it all to never taking themselves even the slightest bit seriously. Ahead of the band's appearance at Soundwave 2015, vocalist Michael Starr discusses the craziness and raunchiness that is Steel Panther with Matt Doria.

With a name and image like Steel Panther, listeners really shouldn't expect anything more than the most morally-depraved, f**ked-up brand of musical filth.. and that's exactly what they get!

While critics are quick to draw a sceptic bow across some of the song material – was there reeeeeeeally a gangbang at the old folks home? – frontman and 'leadwhore' Michael Starr insists that all of their lyrical content is as legitimate as could be.

"All of that stuff that we're singing about is stuff that's actually happened in our lives," he insists somewhat dubiously, adding that there are obviously exceptions to the rule – "Tiger Woods' is not about an experience; it's just about Tiger Woods."

Taking a trip down memory lane, Starr recalls one particular moment that clocks in pretty high on his crazy-scale.

"I picked up this chick after a show. I was pretty f**ked up so I don't totally remember it that clearly but we ended up in her room," Starr reminisces. "Anyway, I'm f**king her and I hear something so I turn around and her bedroom door is just slightly open. Then she actually whispers in my ear, 'Don't worry, he likes to watch.' That is so creepy, right?! And I just thought 'Well, f**k, I'm already in; I might as well keep going.' [...and not a single person was surprised – Ed.]

"When I woke up the next morning, her dad made us both breakfast!" Starr exclaims. "When I walked out the front door, I realised I was at some trailer park. I was in my spandex and my boots, all of my clothes from the night before. I'm walking down the trailer park drive and I've got no f**kin' clue where I'm at and no money either."

Without doubt, when you get as f**ked up as Steel Panther, remembering exactly where you've been, which hearts you've screwed, can be a tricky task. Enter the infamous Russ Parrish, an axe-wielding, Asian-hooker-loving icon perhaps better known as 'Satchel'.

"He's the creator of the genius behind this music that we do," Starr says of the Steel Panther guitarist. "What he does, he's like a fly on the wall within his own party. Stuff will happen on the road

and we'll experience different things then when you sit with your boys after a party, you talk about the hilarious shit that happened the night before. Well, Satchel takes those kinds of stories and puts them to music."

Partying like tomorrow is the end of the world is just what Steel Panther do best and the one thing everyone wants to do is throw down with them. As Starr explains, "The after parties start with backstage passes; we'll have our tour manager write in about six or seven backstage passes. Then we have our main dude who takes care of all our 'VIP' [chicks] and he'll be at the barricade keeping an eye on me, Satchel, Lexxi, and even Stix. Whoever we point out, he'll hand out a pass."

Starr makes it clear not just anyone is eligible for a night of debauchery with Steel Panther: "Usually, the girls we end up pulling onstage, they're willing to show their tits in front of the whole audience and that means they probably like to have anal sex, y'know, so we give them passes!"

On the after-after parties, where all the 'real' fun happens, Starr elaborates: "We have a special room set up with beers and music – kind of like a party atmosphere. After the show, we go backstage and get cleaned up, and then we go into 'the holding tank', where all the parties are. We weed through all the girls that have to go home with their boyfriends/husbands and the remaining girls are the ones that end up on the bus."

No strangers to getting down and dirty in Australia, Steel Panther are just days away from making their second appearance at Soundwave; "I'll tell ya, the Soundwave tour is loaded with fun," Starr says of the chaotic event. "Not only are you on tour in Australia, which is killer and warm and you're at the beach most of the time, but you're travelling with a bunch of dudes in bands. Everybody likes to party so it's like one big happy camping trip full of heavy metal dudes ready to party."

Steel Panther have been f**king like wallabies on our shores since 2012 but the band itself dates back all the way to 2000. With Starr almost 50 and the other members not too far off, one has to





A DIFFERENT ONE EACH NIGHT

Words: Matt Doria

With Soundwave right around the corner, Matt Doria takes a look at the Steel Panther discography and picks out five Steel Panther jams you need to learn before SW15.



Song: 'Gangbang at the Old Folks Home'
From the album: *All You Can Eat* (2014)

Why it rules: One of the few Steel Panther jams you really hope isn't based on a true story, 'Gangbang at the Old Folks Home' is the story of a delivery boy who winds up... well, you get the picture. Cringeworthy to say the least but too catchy and downright hilarious to be overlooked. Expect to see this in the middle of their set.



Song: 'Fat Girl (Thar She Blows)'
From the album: *Feel the Steel* (2009)

Why it rules: With a strong verse and synth-heavy instrumental, 'Fat Girl' takes the '80s hair metal flair that made 2009's *Feel the Steel* so memorable and fills it with food-themed sexual euphemisms. If that isn't enough to convince you it's great, you can f**k right off! Expect to see this one towards the end.



Song: 'Party Like Tomorrow is the End of the World'
From the album: *All You Can Eat* (2014)

Why it rules: The lead hit from Steel Panther's latest full-length, 'Party Like Tomorrow is the End of the World', is an apocalyptic party anthem with an honest message behind it: the end of the world could very well happen tomorrow so let's get f**ked up and go crazy tonight! Expect them to kick off with this one.



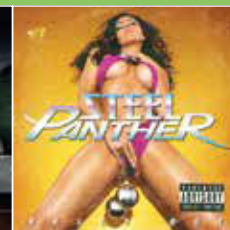
Song: 'Just Like Tiger Woods'
From the album: *Balls Out* (2011)

Why it rules: 'Just Like Tiger Woods' was an all-time classic from the moment it was released. When the band played the song for Woods, as Michael Starr explains, "He wasn't able to enjoy the song because it brought back too many memories of a really shitty time in his life, and the shitty time he was referring to, of course, was when he got caught. Other than that, he said he had a great time!" Expect this to be their second or third song.



Song: 'Death to All but Metal'
From the album: *Feel the Steel* (2009)

Why it rules: Arguably their biggest single to date, 'Death to All but Metal' is an all-out musical assault complete with a guest spot by Corey Taylor. With Slipknot headlining Soundwave 2015, there's the potential he might jump on stage for what could possibly be one of the greatest moments in the festival's history. Expect to see this as the closing song, complete with a barrage of pyrotechnics.



wonder just how long it'll be before they hang up their spandex and wave our gloryholes goodbye.

Starr remains optimistic if not unsure.

"We've been touring with Judas Priest and Glenn Tipton turned 71," he says. Tipton is actually 67 but when Mr. Michael Starr is on a roll, you don't dare interrupt. "He went out that night and did the show the next night with an hour's sleep. So I think to myself, 'Holy f**k! If he can be doing this at 71, I could be doing this at 71!'"

Whatever the future holds for Steel Panther, Starr is certain it won't be anything too serious.

"At this point in our career, anything we do is based around Steel Panther because I don't think that we could ever do anything that's not about heavy metal and having fun- that's just what we do and I don't want to do anything else," he says. "I was thinking about it earlier: imagine if Judas Priest decided 'Let's just play pop music.' I would have to go out and shoot somebody!"

Given Steel Panther's anything-is-possible attitude, let's hope that doesn't actually happen. **H**



BREAKING THE MOLD

Words: Carl Neumann Photo: Travis Chinn

The Judas Priest story spans over 40 years and includes 17 studio albums and multiple world tours. One of the first British heavy rockers to take on the United States' already well-established metal scene, Priest opened the doors for others to follow. Legendary vocalist Rob Halford spares some time to discuss the past, present and future with Carl Neumann.

One couldn't imagine the world of metal without Judas Priest in it. Search online for the best all-time metal album and it's almost impossible to find a list that doesn't contain at least two or three Judas Priest albums. Very few bands can match this level of exultation – Metallica can, of course, as can Black Sabbath and Iron Maiden also. After that, it's really Motörhead, Pantera, Megadeth, Slayer and just a couple of others.

Yet each of these bands have one thing in common: a prominent lead vocalist who uses his voice and presence to harness his band's performance as if it were a monstrous steel stallion, and Judas Priest singer Rob Halford could be the largest of them all. Belying his megastar qualities and screaming four-octave voice, Halford is a charming and whimsically-humorous man who joined the band in 1973, replacing original singer Al Atkins.

Once guitarist KK Downing enlisted Glenn Tipton to join him and help create the band's infamous two-pronged guitar attack, Judas Priest as we know them today was born.

Between 1974 and 1978, Priest released five albums, evolving their original blues-rock sound into what is now considered classic metal; however, it was the release of *British Steel* in 1980 that sent the band screaming up charts in the UK and USA. Three hit singles – 'Breaking the Law', 'United' and 'Living After Midnight' – brought Priest to the attention of influential TV show *Top of the Pops* and the Live Aid Festival. Judas Priest had arrived, and they had every intention of injecting a musical spectrum saturated by rock 'n' roll with their flamboyant and energetic brand of heavy metal.

"It was in a very small room at a school in a place called – I hope I get this right – Bilston," Halford says in a thick Brummie accent of his first experiences with his new band. "This was a little room and it used to be run by the local vicar – his name was Joe, Father Joe. So, this room got this nickname of being Holy Joe's. It was where Slade used to rehearse and a lot of the local bands used to go there and play."

Halford is less clear on the details of his first ever performance with Priest some 40 years ago.

"You know, that's a really good question. I want to say – I could be completely wrong here – we opened up for a band in the Birmingham Town Hall, which was a big venue for us back then. I cannot remember whom we opened up for. I remember we blew our PA up about halfway through the set and the front of the PA exploded with white powder like confetti from the speaker cones. All of the fans were being covered in this stuff and they thought, 'Wow! This is brilliant, man. Look at these special effects.' They had no idea it was the PA blowing up!"

Priest's first album *Rocka Rolla* wasn't a smooth one to produce and wasn't released quite like the band had wanted. According to the band, producer Rodger Bain overshadowed the production of the album and made decisions with which the band did not concede. Bain, whose CV includes Black Sabbath's first three albums, decided to omit songs that were fan favourites live and also chopped 'Caviar and Meths' from an epic 10-minute piece down to a mini-2-minute instrumental.

"The label at the time was pretty tight with the cash," Halford remembers. "We didn't have much money and we could only do what we eventually called 'the vampire hours' – we could only work the night shift in the studio because it was 50 per cent cheaper than the day shift. We would sleep outside the studio in vans, work through the night for about 12 hours or so until the morning and then come out, grab a bit of food and climb back in the van to sleep."

Once *British Steel* broke, Priest could do no wrong – *Screaming For Vengeance* (1982), *Defenders Of The Faith* (1984) and *Turbo* (1986) each became platinum-certified records in the US but a flirtation with synthesizers on *Turbo* and the inclusion of some questionable cover material on 1988's *Ram It Down* affected sales – Chuck Berry's 'Johnny B. Goode' anyone?

The triumphant speed metal album *Painkiller* (1990) re-emphasised Judas Priest's relevance to the scene and the title track remains one of the band's heaviest efforts. Alas, Halford quit the band shortly after the record was released, throwing the metal world into turmoil. The band recruited Tim 'Ripper' Owens from a Judas Priest tribute act and released two albums (1997's *Jugulator* and 2001's *Demolition*) but lukewarm



BOW DOWN

'Redeemer of Souls'
@YouTube

SCINTILLATING HEAVY



“We didn’t have much money and we could only do what we eventually called ‘the vampire hours’ – we could only work the night shift in the studio because it was 50 per cent cheaper than the day shift.”

reception and surging public demand for a reunion saw Halford finally return to the line-up in 2003, some 11 years after his departure.

The classic songwriting trio of Tipton, Downing and Halford worked together twice more to produce *Angel of Retribution* (2005) and *Nostradamus* (2008) before Downing quit in 2011 midway through the Epitaph World Tour. At the time, he said there had been an “ongoing breakdown in working relationship between myself, elements of the band, and the band’s management for some time”.

Halford has said since that Downing “can never be replaced; he is unique”, but the Priest juggernaut has rolled on, recruiting Richie Faulkner – born the same year *British Steel* was released. Halford indicates that the two-guitar line-up has always been crucial to the band’s compositional process.

“About the time we hit the mark with *British Steel*, we understood that the best moments with us were when it was a trio – two guitar players and a singer. That is when we would always get the best results,” he says. “I don’t know why that is, whether it’s the chemistry or whatever, but from *British Steel* you saw the writing trio of Tipton, Halford and Downing, and that’s pretty much how it was until K.K. retired. Now it’s Tipton, Halford and Faulkner.”

One only needs to hear Priest’s 2014 album *Redeemer of Souls* to know it’s a formula that’s working. The band has again returned to that classic metal sound and the album has been received warmly by fans and critics alike.

“I think we all knew in our hearts that it was very important to get back to the roots, back to the heart and soul of Priest’s metal,” Halford says. “Although we didn’t have a definite plan for *Redeemer of Souls*, we ▶▶

definitely understood that it was time to show that we can still make this kind of music."

This insatiable desire to continue to perform at the highest level motivates the band these days far more than album sales or chart positions.

"We don't really need to make any more records, to be honest, but we do it for ourselves – we want to see if we still have what it takes to make some good metal songs. Especially, with Richie, this was his first opportunity to write with me and Glenn, and he was just magnificent. You know, when you are in a band, you are always challenging yourself; you're always seeing how good you could be. Everybody supports everybody else in Priest and we are always trying to get the best results from each other, and I think the end result turned out pretty good."

On the 40th anniversary of the band, Halford is particularly excited about performing in Australia again, firstly at the Soundwave festivals and secondly in club shows with audacious party-rockers Steel Panther. The festival shows are of particular interest to Halford for the chance they give the band to continue expanding upon their already massive

audience.

"We have to bang in as much metal as we can. When we walk out on that stage we will not only be playing to our Priest fans, we will be playing to fans of a lot of other bands so you really need to push it a little bit stronger to connect," he says, taking the opportunity to give the band's social media a healthy plug. "The whole thing [playing live] is about gaining momentum still and bringing new fans into the 'Priest world' as we call it. We love bringing new fans into the fold. We have a Twitter hashtag – #priestfamily – and we love connecting with new fans."

Before that happens, Halford has a message for longstanding Aussie fans: "We can't say thank-you enough to all our Australian metalheads for their ongoing support and dedication to Priest. We don't come as much as we would like to [but] you mean the world to us and we are really looking forward to getting back out on the stage at the festivals and 'Sidewaves' [the club shows that Soundwave artists do in between festival appearances]. So thank you, thank you, thank you. Keep the metal alive." **H**

FORTY YEARS OF FEROCITY: A BRIEF HISTORY OF JUDAS PRIEST

1969: The blues-based band Judas Priest form. Line-up includes Al Atkins (lead vocals), Bruno Staphenhill (bass), John Partridge (drums) and John Perry (guitar). It's Staphenhill who came up with the name Judas Priest.

1970: The band split in April after a tour of Scotland and the UK.

1971: Atkins meets KK Downing, Ian Hill and John Ellis and forms a new band under the Judas Priest title.

1973: The quartet plays around Birmingham and the surrounding areas with various drummers, sometimes opening for bands such as Budgie, Thin Lizzy. Alan Atkins departs.

1974: Halford joins the band, bringing drummer John Hinch from his previous band Hiroshima. Glenn Tipton joins as another guitarist and the band release their debut single 'Rocka Rolla' followed by the album of the same name.

1975: Judas Priest release *Sad Wings of Destiny* and play the 1975 Reading Festival, securing a much bigger fan base.

1977: *Sin After Sin* becomes the first Priest record under a major label (CBS) and the first of the band's eleven consecutive albums to be certified gold or higher in the US.

1978: *Stained Class* and *Killing Machine* (titled *Hell Bent for Leather* in the US) are released back to back.

1979: Live album *Unleashed in the East* becomes the first Judas Priest album to go platinum.

The band is criticised for the use of studio-enhancements and overdubbing on a live album; Les Binks quits as he is unhappy with the band's desire to move towards a simplified radio rock sound. Dave Holland joins, formerly from the band Trapeze.

1980: The band release *British Steel*. The songs are shorter and have more mainstream radio hooks but retain a heavy metal feel. Widespread radio play follows.

1981: *Point of Entry* is released, following the same formula as *British Steel*.

1982: *Screaming for Vengeance* is released and features the song 'You've Got Another Thing Comin', which became a major radio hit in the US. The album is Judas Priest's most commercially successful, going double platinum.

1983: *Defenders of the Faith* hits the record stores. The press call it "Screaming for Vengeance II".

1985: Judas Priest, along with Black Sabbath, Queen and other performers, play at Live Aid to help raise funds for relief of the ongoing Ethiopian famine.

1986: The colourful *Turbo* album is released, notable for heavy use of synthesisers. The record goes platinum and is followed by a huge world tour and the release of the live album *Priest... Live!*

1988: Priest release *Ram It Down*. The synthesisers disappear in favour of a heavier metal sound. Drummer Dave Holland leaves the band.

1990: Embracing speed metal, the band release *Painkiller*, which becomes one of the public's all-time favourite metal albums despite a slow start in the charts; the band is named as a defendant in a civil action law suit that alleges a subliminal message on Judas Priest's *Stained Class* album influenced the suicides of two men. The suit is dismissed after the judge rules that there are no subliminal messages on the record.

1991: Halford leaves Judas Priest to start his own band called Fight.

1996: The band hires Judas Priest tribute singer Tim 'Ripper' Owens to replace Halford.

1997–2001: The new line-up released two albums, *Jugulator* (1997) and *Demolition* (2001). World tours attract much smaller crowds than past tours with Halford.

2003: Judas Priest and Rob Halford reunite. Owens parts amicably with the band to join American thrash band Iced Earth.

2005: Priest release *Angel of Retribution* and embark on a world tour with Halford as vocalist.

2006: The band is inducted into the VH1 Rock Honors' Hall of Fame along with Queen, KISS and Def Leppard.

2008: Judas Priest surprise everyone with a concept album about the 16th-century French writer Nostradamus, aptly titled *Nostradamus*.

2010: The band announce the Epitaph World Tour and announce intentions to retire from live touring.

2011: KK Downing quits. He is replaced by Richie Faulkner who had his first live performance with Judas Priest on American Idol playing 'Living After Midnight' and 'Breaking the Law'.

2014: *Redeemer of Souls* is released. It maintains the legendary band's well-earned status as metal legends.

2015: Judas Priest tours Australia as a part of Soundwave Festival. Sydney and Brisbane get Sidewave shows.

Words: Dianna Theadora Kenny, professor of Psychology and Music, University of Sydney

THE 27 CLUB IS A MYTH 56 IS THE BUM NOTE FOR MUSICIANS

THE HEAVIEST MEMBERS OF THE 27 CLUB

Bryan Ottson - American Head Charge (prescription drug overdose)
Jeremy Michael Ward - The Mars Volta (heroin overdose)
Sean Patrick McCabe - Ink & Dagger (asphyxiation)
Kami - Malice Mizer (subarachnoid haemorrhage)
Kristen Pfaff - Hole (heroin overdose)
Kurt Cobain - Nirvana (suicide by gunshot)
Helmut Köllen - Triumphator (carbon monoxide poisoning)
Dave Alexander - The Stooges (pulmonary adema)
Jimi Hendrix - The Jimi Hendrix Experience (asphyxiation)
Brian Jones - Rolling Stones (drowning)

What do Otis Redding, Gram Parsons, Nick Drake, Jimmy McCulloch, James Ramey (aka Baby Huey), Bryan Osper and Jon Guthrie have in common?

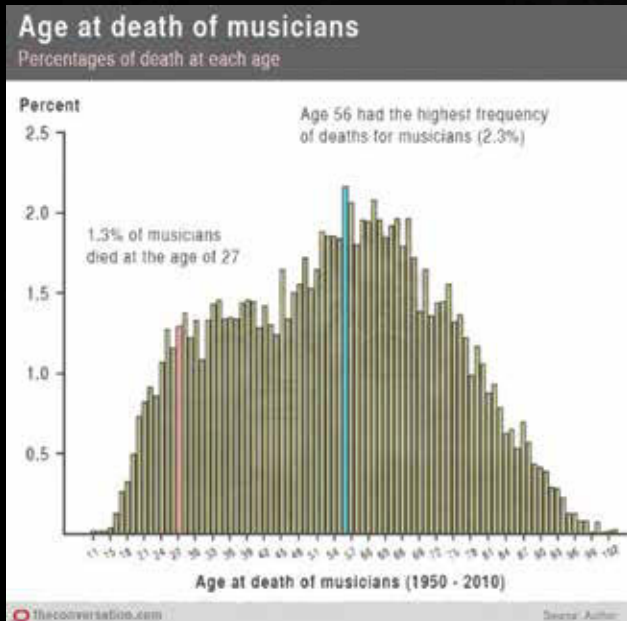
What about Tim Buckley, Gregory Herbert, Zenon de Fleur, Nick Babeu, Shannon Hoon, Beverly Kenney and Bobby Bloom?

And Alan Wilson, Jesse Belvin, Rudy Lewis, Gary Thain, Kristen Pfaff, Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, Pete de Freitas, Raymond "Freaky Tah" Rogers, Helmut Köllen, and Linda Jones?

They are all dead pop musicians. The first group died aged 26; the second group died aged 28; and the third group died aged 27.

In a population of dead musicians spanning seven decades from 1950 to 2010 for which an accurate age of death could be identified ($n=11,054$), 1.2 per cent ($n=128$) died at 26, 1.4 per cent ($n=153$) died at 28 and 1.3 per cent ($n=144$) died at 27.

Age 56 had the highest frequency of deaths (2.2 per cent; $n=239$). Notables dying at this age include Eddie Rabbitt, Tammy Wynette, Mimi Farina, Johnny Ramone, Chris LeDoux, Vandy "Smokey" Hampton, and Charles "Baby" Tate. Below is a visual representation of the percentages of deaths at each age.



So why isn't there a 56 Club or a 28 Club? Is it because Brian Jones (drowning), Jimi Hendrix (aspirated vomitus from barbiturate overdose), Janis Joplin (heroin overdose), Jim Morrison (drug-induced heart attack), Kurt Cobain (suicide by gunshot) and Amy Winehouse (alcohol poisoning) all died aged 27?

All were tortured souls who reached pop stardom and died tragically at their zenith. Perhaps we need to consider a change of name for this group – from the 27 Club to “The Tragic Six” or “The Tragic Seven” if we include Robert Johnson?

There are many more musicians who died at the age of 27 than these six (or seven) – there were another 137 in my population including the very notable musicians named earlier. So ...

What percentage of pop musicians need to die at age 27 to support the existence of the 27 Club?

Here is a thought exercise we can submit to statistical scrutiny to answer the question: how many pop musicians need to die at the age of 27 to justify the notion of a 27 Club. The actual proportion is 1.3 per cent. Do we need 1.4 per cent, 1.5 per cent, 1.6 per cent, 2 per cent or 2.5 per cent of popular musicians to die at the age of 27 to conclude that age 27 is associated with a higher risk of death than other ages?

We can test this question using a single sample ChiSq test, which assesses whether there is a significant difference between the expected frequencies (i.e., specified proportions of deaths at 27) and observed frequency of actual deaths.

As the table shows, a minimum of 1.5 per cent to 1.6 per cent of deaths in the population need to occur at age 27 to ‘justify’ the 27 Club statistically. It is at this number that the ChiSq value exceeds the critical ChiSq. In other words, the actual number of deaths is significantly less than the number that would need to die at 27 if the 27 Club hypothesis were correct based on numbers alone.

But even at 1.6 per cent of deaths occurring at 27, few would argue that this constitutes a sufficiently large proportion of deaths.

While the actual numbers of pop musician deaths don't show a spike in deaths at age 27 and hence do not support the 27 Club, there appear to be qualities shared by the 27-ers that stand them apart from many other deceased young pop musicians

Amy Winehouse f5048439" by Rama - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 for via Wikimedia Commons

The "27 Club"
The number of musicians who need to die at age 27 to statistically justify a "27 Club"

	Died at 27 (n=)	Died at other age	Total deaths	Critical ChiSq = 3.8*
Actual 1.3%	143	10,911	11,054	
If 1.4%	155	10,899	11,054	0.942
If 1.5%	166	10,888	11,054	3.235
If 1.6%	177	10,877	11,054	6.590
If 2.0%	211	10,833	11,054	28.092
If 2.5%	276	10,778	11,054	65.740

* All ChiSq values at p<0.001

Source: Author

Increased risk of death extends beyond age 27 to early adulthood and middle age

The idea of the 27 Club has been imprinted into the collective imagination by books on the subject – such as Howard Sounes' biographical book *27* on the big six 27-ers, Sarah Milne's wider coverage of pop musicians who have died at 27, and Michael Owens' more fanciful treatise on the significance of the age of 27, together with continued media fascination with the notion.

But other investigations into the 27 Club, for example, by Eric Segalstad, Martin Wolkewitz, and mine, have concluded that the age of 27 does not bestow any greater risk of death in popular musicians than other ages.

Notwithstanding, all of these studies have identified an increased risk of death in pop musicians during the younger decades of the lifespan compared with the general population.

Sampling strategy and sample size varied between studies but the conclusions were essentially the same, as in my recent research findings, that pop musicians die younger than the general population.

Wolkewitz and his colleagues studied the 1,046 musicians who had a number-one album in the UK between 1956 and 2007 and found that the death rate per 100 musician years for age 27 (0.57 deaths) was similar for other ages: age 25 (0.56 deaths) and 32 (0.54 deaths).

They concluded there was no peak in risk at 27 years, but observed a two- to three-fold increase in risk of death for British pop musicians with number-one albums between 20 to 39 years compared with the general UK population.

The 27 Club is not just about the numbers

I would like to give some comfort to those who might grieve the demise of the 27 Club.

While the actual numbers of pop musician deaths don't show a spike in deaths at age 27 and hence do not support the 27 Club, there appear to be qualities shared by the 27-ers that stand them apart from many other deceased young pop musicians, which may go some way to understanding how this club entered the pop culture psyche.

These qualities include exceptional talent, the contribution of groundbreaking innovations in their musical genre, intense psychological pain, a squalid death at their peak, and immortalisation – each of "the tragic six" has become a cult figure.

Jimi Hendrix was described in *Rolling Stone* as "the greatest guitarist of all time [...] one of the biggest cultural figures of the Sixties, a psychedelic voodoo child who spewed clouds of distortion and pot smoke."

His unrepeatable virtuosity on the electric guitar received the following citation in the *Rock & Roll Hall of Fame*:

"[Hendrix] expanded the range and vocabulary of the electric guitar into areas no musician has ever ventured before. His boundless drive, technical ability and creative application of such effects as wah-wah and distortion forever transformed the sound of rock and roll."

Janis Joplin, "the greatest white blues mama who ever lived", was crowned "First Lady" and "Queen" of rock and roll. She died only two weeks after Hendrix. Although the official cause of death was heroin overdose, Janis fell into a "yawning chasm of tortured loneliness". Then, "the life was gone, the legend was born".

Just a year later, in 1971, the wild, handsome, charismatic Jim Morrison exited the pop music scene in similar fashion. Because of the proximity of these three deaths, the kernel of the idea of a 27 Club was born.

Brian Jones (d. 1969) and Robert Johnson ("King of the Delta Blues Singers") (d. 1938) became retrospective members; Kurt Cobain (d. 1994) and Amy Winehouse (d. 2011) have reinforced the idea in recent times.

Immortalised in death, a life-size bronze statue of Amy Winehouse has just been unveiled in London. **H**

Words: David Griffiths Photos: Courtesy of Warner Music

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND

TALES FROM THE INSIDE

Funeral For A Friend have never been a band to take a step backwards. From thought-provoking lyrics on politics and religion to statement-making art like the cover of their album *Hours*, which featured a schoolgirl at her locker wearing a bullet-proof vest, they have always known how to make headlines. Vocalist Matthew Davies-Kreye talks with David Griffiths.

The one thing you don't expect when interviewing Matthew Davies-Kreye, the lead singer of Welsh outfit Funeral For A Friend, is that he is softly-spoken and polite. After all, he is the frontman of a band who have created plenty of ripples over the years by encouraging their fans to question the pillars of government, organised religion and even education. Hell, their 2005 effort *Hours* pretty much became a series of anthems for anyone who ever saw their high school as a war-zone. Still, the man who describes himself as "someone who likes to be alone in the quiet" is calm and unassuming.

Now Funeral For A Friend have delivered their seventh feature-length album in the form of *Chapter And Verse*, an opus that declares its intentions loudly before it is even played with song titles like 'You've Got a Bad Case of the Religions,' 'Pencil Pusher' and 'Modern Excuse For a Man'.

Despite some upheavals during the recording of *Chapter And Verse*, including the departure of drummer Pat Lundy and the decision to work with a new producer for the first time since 2007, Davies-Kreye the recording process was pretty laidback.

"It was pretty lacklustre," he says with a laugh. "The writing process occurred during our touring period with Conduit. As a band we knew pretty much what we wanted to do with the new album, what direction we wanted to go in, and even that we wanted to work with someone new. We were all together so we started writing songs that were I guess a bit more organic, maybe even a bit more aggressive; songs that were more in line with the influences that the band have."

Davies-Kreye agrees with some of the *Chapter And Verse* reviews that, on this record, claim Funeral For A Friend seem to have moved away from the sound that most of their fans have come to know and love.

"I'm not sure that we were consciously aware at the start that we were moving away from and shaking off that more metal sound but we have developed that into a more hardcore and post-hardcore sound of the scene that we all came from," he explains. "There is certainly a huge

punk and emo – proper emo – influence to it [*Chapter and Verse*] that makes me really happy. It's just really an album where all of just followed our guts really."

It is also obvious that Davies-Kreye was not ever afraid of how the new sound would be received by fans and critics. "After fourteen years in this band I am past the point of sleepless nights now," he says. "For me, the only seal of approval I need is to be able to listen to it [the album] and be proud of it; to stand behind it and feel that it is a valid kind of document of what I and my band mates were going through when we wrote and recorded it."

So from where does Davies-Kreye draw the inspiration to write Funeral For A Friend's thought-provoking lyrics?

"Everywhere, really. I'm a very quiet individual and I like to keep to myself but I'm always absorbing things," he explains. "For many years I've had this kind of love/hate relationship with religion so I guess that inner-struggle comes out – that question of whether I have any room for that [religion]. This album also has a lot of political stuff, a lot of social stuff, a lot of things about the path divide, the wealth divide, even the economic crisis that our nation [America] has gone through for the last six or seven years. All of that figures heavily into what you do – we've noticed it as a band ourselves."

Perhaps more surprising is Davis-Kreye's admission that feminist issues even get a run on the record.

"I've always been into things like feminism and socialism, stuff like that," he admits. "Whether that has always been apparent to people or not I don't know but it has always been there and I think it's a little more focussed on this record. There are some personal things on there as well, little diary pieces here and there, and little bits of me being pissed off and stuff."

With that much personal fuel embedded into *Chapter And Verse*, all Funeral For A Friend fans can really do now is sit back and eagerly await to see this new material up close and live when the band next hits our shores. **H**



DIG DEEPER

1%
@YouTube



Words: Steve Jenkins Photo: Marc Campbell

NE OBLIVISCARIS

Ne Obliviscaris have taken flight with the release of their new album *Citadel* debuting in the ARIA charts. Having just commenced a world tour that has resulted from a sky-rocketing crowd-funding campaign, vocalist and violinist Tim Charles spoke to HEAVY about how all of this was made possible.

What a past 12 months Ne Obliviscaris have experienced. It's definitely not a normal occurrence to see a blackened progressive band make the mainstream album charts with just their second album and violinist Tim Charles is impressed.

"For a band of our genre and from our scene of Australian extreme metal, we don't really think about charting in the ARIAs [Australian Recording Industry Association charts]. As a band it's definitely one of those things that you look into the future and think about things you want to aim for, but we never really gave it any thought. To see the charts filled with pop, hip-hop and then to see us in there it was pretty special."

Last year Ne Obliviscaris started a crowd-funding campaign, a common occurrence among bands who are trying to raise funds for recording and touring. The difference here is that Ne Obliviscaris smashed their lofty target of \$40,000 inside two days in an astonishing show of fan support. Charles said the band wasn't at all surprised.

"We did a lot of planning and a lot of research for about nine months

before we actually launched it," he explains of the campaign. "We had a good idea that it would go well and we were confident we'd hit the target but to end up with \$86,000 was just insane! It was certainly a best-case scenario and we thank our fans dearly."

Crowd-funding continues to be something of an unregulated practice. For every campaign that is run ethically, there are others that abuse the process, leaving fans with a sour taste. Bands must be aware of the obligation to ensure any donated funds are used in the manner previously promised and that the process as a whole is entirely transparent so that fans continue to support the crowd-funding system. Charles believes the most important thing is "to guarantee something that you can deliver."

"We knew we could deliver these tours before we started the campaign, getting offers from promoters and interest from overseas," he says. "We pretty much worked out the minimum amount we needed to make this happen and anything extra would be used to make the tour schedule even longer and better."

The world tour has just kicked off in India of all places and will feature shows in such faraway places as Israel and Japan as well as the more customary destinations of America and central Europe.

"Looking into this year, it's just amazing all the places we get to visit all across the world. We've had fans in India and other countries asking



The melting pot of Ne Obliviscaris

Any band with six members is sure to bring a lot of creative ideas to the table, especially when the members have such diverse and varied influences as the members of Ne Obliviscaris.

Violinist Tim Charles discusses from where the band draw the inspiration that helps them to create such magical and multi-layered music. "We all have different musical tastes and interests but there's a little bit of overlap there," he explains. "That's how we manage to make it work but also how we manage to end up as a very diverse and eclectic sound. For me personally, I'm influenced by everything from Devin Townsend, Dream Theater, Opeth, Emperor and Between The Buried And Me. One of my personal favourite musicians of all time is John Coltrane; I'm a big jazz fan. We tend to take a little bit from everywhere and bring it all together into this big melting pot that comes out with the sound we have."

us to come there for quite a while now and to actually be able to do that is very exciting," Charles says. "We come back after India to do Soundwave and then it's basically onward and upward for the next 12 months."

One wonders if the countries selected for the world tour are based on satisfying existing fans or whether the object is to venture into uncharted waters in search of a larger audience. Charles indicates that the tour is trying to achieve both.

"Our two biggest markets are North America and Europe so that's a no-brainer for widening our market. Beyond that we're eager to get back to Asia after our little 2013 run," he explains. "Also it's about making the most out of every opportunity and playing as many shows as possible so we can show the audiences what we love to do. We're even doing a headline show in Israel, a place I never thought I would visit, but basically if we have fans and people want us to play then we'll do everything we can to get there."

It's certainly an ambitious schedule that brings with it an element of risk. Ne Obliviscaris are still some distance from being able to headline the US or Europe in their own right and one would imagine that the band is hoping the tour will go well enough to sustain further

magnitude of these factors isn't lost on Charles.

"The biggest challenge for a band like us is that we're at the transitional stage where we have lots of tours booked but we're not a massive headliner band across the world yet," he explains. "We all have day jobs; we're trying to work out how long we can go away and play for before we get fired. We really are taking a big plunge that's going to alter our whole lives to fit around the band – personal, relationships, our careers – just to see if we can do Ne Obliviscaris full time and go all over the world making that our career."

Firstly, there's Soundwave of course, the biggest hard rock and metal music festival in Australia, which is to be the band's final Australian appearance before they head off on their international journey and one that has really excited the lads, according to Charles.

"It was one of the biggest thrills of my career getting the news," he says. "I'm a huge music fan and I'm at Soundwave every year watching some of my favourite bands perform onstage. It's always a great day out and I remember walking around dreaming about how cool it would be to perform there and be a part of that crazy travelling circus. We'll be playing material from both albums. Hopefully we get a good response; we can't wait!" **H**

ventures so that they can avoid going hat-in-hand to the fans next time. The length of the tour will also test the commitment of members who have to decide whether going 'all-in' is what they really want to do. The



Words: Rod Whitfield Photo: Michael Lavine

SOUNDGARDEN NO MORE BLACK DAYS

As far as grunge bands go, they don't come much bigger than Soundgarden. Iconic guitarist Kim Thayill chats with Rod Whitfield about their tour *Down Under*, the power of positive reflection and a new documentary on the band.

There's a distinctive '90s feel at this year's Soundwave festival. Many of those acts are obviously still very much alive and kicking today but also had their respective commercial and creative peaks during the last decade of the 20th century.

A band exemplifying this are the mighty Soundgarden, who are one of the largest bands to emerge from the Seattle-driven grunge scene of the early to mid '90s, along with Nirvana, Pearl Jam and Alice in Chains.

Lead guitar player and co-founding member Kim Thayill is very happy to be sharing the stage again with so many of his band's contemporaries, many of whom they also count as their friends.

"There's a lot of friends of ours going to be there," he says, the expectation evident, "a lot of peers of ours; people who are acquaintances or friends or people we regard highly. Smashing Pumpkins, Marilyn Manson, Slash, Incubus and Judas Priest – I've never met those guys but they're iconic heroes of metal certainly.

"The band who we're probably closest on the whole bill is Faith No More," Thayill continues. "We've known those guys since the mid '80s; we've played a number of shows with those guys, quite a few tours."

Soundgarden formed way back in 1984 and rode the wave of the grunge and alternative rock that broke soon after. They released seminal albums in *Ultramega OK* (1998), *Louder Than Love* (1989) and *Badmotorfinger* (1991) before experiencing massive commercial breakthrough with 1994's *Superunknown*. That record achieved platinum sales five times over in the US and topped the charts in other countries also, including Australia and New Zealand. The double-

platinum *Down on the Upside* came in 1996 before business pressures and internal squabbles forced Soundgarden's premature demise in 1997.

The world loves a comeback, however, and the band announced their reformation in 2010, released their sixth studio album *King Animal* in 2012 and then toured the world for the best part of two years.

Thayill has far more perspective on the band's illustrious career now than he did when the four members parted ways back in 1997, and he believes much of the ill feeling that existed between the guys at that time has receded into the past.

"I think the difference between looking back now and looking back when we broke up is that the feelings are a little bit less negative now. There's a greater maturity now," he says, adding that time has helped him to appreciate the band's achievements. "It's really an incredible opportunity for everyone in the band. Not too many people get the opportunity to reflect back on what you've accomplished in your career and then have the opportunity to build on that again with that maturity and focus. Now we have that opportunity and it's fantastic."

The hiatus, and advances in technology that have occurred during their time away, seem to have revived the band's attitude, creativity and business prospects.

"We're able now to organise aspects of our catalogue – merchandising; new song ideas that we have; social media and eCommerce – and some of our records have gone out of print, which is fantastic. For the first time many of our albums are available digitally," Thayill enthuses. [Is that a hint of commercialism, I hear? – Ed.]



STEP BACK IN TIME

'Spoonman'
@YouTube

heavy feature

"I think the difference between looking back now and looking back when we broke up is that the feelings are a little bit less negative now. There's a greater maturity now."

"Our first album *Ultramega OK* was never available digitally but it became available in 2013. So we have this great opportunity to move forward, as well complete uncompleted things from our past."

Alongside their appearance on the Soundwave Festival and a brief tour of New Zealand afterwards, 2015 may see the release of their second album since their return, although this depends heavily upon prolific frontman Chris Cornell's writing and recording schedule.

"I think Chris is working on a new solo record," Thayill reveals, "which he will probably always do because he writes a lot of material and only some of the material is always appropriate for Soundgarden. But I think he's working on some material for us as well, and the rest of us are doing some writing and coming up with some ideas."

"When we get back from Australia, we'll have a little bit of time off then we'll get back to writing the new record."

Yet another exciting development is the recent announcement of a full-length feature documentary about the band made by Sam Dunn and Scot McFadyen, the anthropological duo behind *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey* and *Global Metal*.

"We're trying to get together the production details of this documentary that Banger Films are going to be doing," Thayill says. "They've done documentaries on Rush and Iron Maiden and they're doing one on Black Sabbath as well, so that's very exciting."

In the meantime, Australian fans get to experience the full force of Soundgarden in a live setting on the upcoming Soundwave Festival tour, during which they are also playing two Sidewave shows [Soundwave side shows] in Melbourne and Sydney. Yep, 2015 is set to be a good year for Soundgarden fans. **H**

THE NEW ALBUM

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FEED HER TO THE SHARKS LEADING THE WAY

Feed Her to the Sharks may call themselves modern melodic metalcore but they've adopted a progressive edge that sets them apart from the rest. Kim Choo, aka Chewy, chats with Michelle O'Rance about the band's new album, signing to Victory Records and the future of metalcore.



Melbourne has a long standing reputation for producing high-calibre bands oozing with talent and Feed Her to the Sharks are no exception. Formed in early 2010 by Kim Choo (guitars and synth) and Andrew Vanderzalm (vocals), the band has worked hard to establish themselves in the Australian scene and to follow in the footsteps of bands such as Parkway Drive and Confession. The hard work is paying off; the group experienced success with their sophomore release *Savage Seas* and the Sharks fan base has grown considerably over the last few years.

Now armed with a contract with Victory Records and a solid line-up – all the members are now based in the same town – Feed Her to the Sharks are preparing to make another assault on Australian and worldwide stages in support of third album *Fortitude*.

Released on February 10, *Fortitude* moves in a slightly different direction to the band's previous releases but still encompasses that core sound that Sharks fans know and love. Much of this flirtation with a new sound comes from the new members in the band, Marinos Katsanevas and Andrew 'Stix' Cotterell, who joined on guitar and drums respectively. Katsanevas and Cotterell have both introduced different creative aspects into the band's songwriting process, so much so that Feed Her to the Sharks can almost be considered a whole new entity. Katsanevas in particular has a very progressive style that gels well with the original sound, explains vocalist Kim 'Chewy' Choo.

"We definitely approached creating this album very differently to anything that we have done in the past because, to be completely honest, we've never really had a full band until now," he says. "Basically the first album was me and Andy [Vanderzalm] and all session musicians and the second album we were approaching musicians to jump onboard as full time members and you go through issues with them and things either work out or they don't. This is the most stable we have felt.

The addition of the new guys has helped make the band a truly collaborative experience, Chewy continues: "Taking onboard all the guys that weren't previously part of writing, we had all five members focused on creating the album together."

Also fuelling the group's experimentation was a diverse mix of influences, most of which were genres other than metal.

"There were a lot of different styles of music that we listened to [while writing this record]," Chewy explains. "Hip-hop, electronica, pop even. There was a lot of listening to song structure as well, like when a big chorus hits in pop music and why do people listen to that kind of music? We were like, 'How can we incorporate that sound of influence into our music?' So we took a lot of influences from other styles that way and blended it with our own. Hopefully people like it!"

One area in which the band stuck to the well-trodden path was in album production and even though they were experimenting heavily with their sound, there was no question as to who would be tasked with recording the album.

Feed Her To The Sharks travelled back to Gothenburg in late September last year and joined forces once more with Fredrik Nordström in Studio Fredman. Recording the third album in Sweden was the natural choice for the band as they have become comfortable with Nordström and his studio over the years, developing a strong working relationship with him.

It's not just Nordström's attention that the band have caught. In March last year Feed Her to the Sharks inked a worldwide deal with Victory Records, quite a coup for them.

"Signing with Victory has opened up a lot more doors for us definitely," Chewy says. "It has been pretty good so far; they seem to really like the album and they don't step on our toes in terms of creative control, especially musically. We are



Fortitude by Feed Her to the Sharks

Words: Jeremy Vane-Tempest



A relentless barrage of breakdowns, double kick, abrasive synth, caustic screeches, catchy sing alongs and absolutely shredding guitar solos are what greet the listener on *Fortitude*, Feed Her to the Sharks' third full-length release. There is literally no respite for the listener from this endless curb stomp that will have fans of the genre punching the sky. Individually, the songs are technical perfection. The guitarists in particular rival Animals As Leaders in terms of their ability to shred but the other band members are no slouches, keeping up throughout. If I have one criticism, it's only that the album might be let down by the repetitive nature of the material, which doesn't stray too far from the book of metalcore. *Fortitude* is a good example of the genre from a band growing in experience.



TAKE A BITE

'The World is Yours'
@YouTube

"There were a lot of different styles of music that we listened to [while writing this record] – hip-hop, electronica, pop even. We were like, 'How can we incorporate that sound of influence into our music?' So we took a lot of influences from other styles that way and blended it with our own."

looking forward to releasing this album and seeing where it all goes."

Having a label such as Victory in their corner has opened up tour talks and Feed Her To The Sharks are expected to jet off to the USA later in the year. Australian fans shouldn't worry as the lads won't be heading off without some shows on their home soil first.

Getting ahead of the game in the music business is about more than just talent. Among other things, it's about working hard, networking, embracing opportunity and never losing sight of where you want to be in the long run. Chewy shares some insight on what he thinks makes a successful band in today's industry.

"The story is different for every band," he says. "If you talk to one band they might have had a lucky break in one area but they might have had twenty others obstacles placed in

front of them. You just have to keep working hard."

Metalcore is saturated with bands so it must be hard to stand out from the crowd.

"Yes, there are a lot of other bands out there and it is a competitive thing but you try not to think about that," he adds. "You just have to step back and focus on what you are doing as a band and what your business is doing because every little thing affects the big picture at the end of the day."

It's easy to see that Feed Her to the Sharks are a band on the rise, yet there are critics in the scene who suggest the metalcore genre has run its course in Australia and has begun to lose its appeal here and around the world. Chewy doesn't think about it that way.

"I don't like looking at music and labelling it as genre-specific, you know? Especially as we were listening to a lot of different styles of music leading up to writing this album. At the end of the day, if the music sounds good to someone and they like it, that's all that really matters," Chewy says, adding that Feed Her to the Sharks are a band less inclined to follow trends. "When we set out to create this record, we were creating it mainly for us. Obviously you have to cater to what your fans are enjoying as well and write towards what has worked in the past but we opened up a lot of different doors with our music."

It all comes down to personal preference and if there are critics who believe that metalcore bands are a dying breed, maybe they need to look around as there are more bands like Feed Her to the Sharks who are working hard and getting noticed by the right people in this extremely competitive industry.

For now, *Fortitude* has invigorated Feed Her to the Sharks and the band are setting themselves for an unforgettable year.

"We are really enjoying it and hopefully the fans will see that and it will open the door to a wider audience as well," Chewy explains. **H**

HEAVY





Words: Karl Lean Photo: Linda Åkerberg

DEATHSTARS A LIVE OBSESSION



GET
INDOCTRINATED
'Explode'
@YouTube

Deathstars, Sweden's kings of 'death glam', are heading back to Australia for Soundwave 2015. Karl Lean managed to catch up with lead vocalist Andreas 'Whiplasher Bernadotte' Bergh in a conversation delayed by international phone problems and a minor quake in Italy.

The internet is down in Italy. It always is so everything is chaos!" Andreas Bergh, lead singer of Deathstars is laughing about the globe's most common complaint – slow internet. The enigmatic frontman is 14,000km away in Italy and chatting excitedly about the band's forthcoming appearance at Soundwave 2015.

Considering the previous two Deathstars tours to Australia were to play in pubs, the lure of the biggest stages Down Under have Bergh in something of a tizz.

"That's why you're in a band, you know," he says of playing live. "It's what it's all about so that [Soundwave] will be great, and Australia for us Europeans is an exotic place so we always have a good time there."

It's quickly apparent that Bergh's enthusiasm for touring is genuine and, perhaps surprisingly, growing all the time. He emphasises repeatedly the satisfaction he gets from taking the Deathstars performance to the people. "There's two dimensions to the band when it comes to music," he explains. "With the album [writing and recording], it is more internal, more of a private matter, but being on stage and on tour is more of a party. When we did the last European tour I don't think I ever enjoyed it as much, and maybe I didn't enjoy it before."

Why the change of heart? Bergh isn't sure.

"It's much more rewarding now I think. I don't know why really. Maybe we were a bit more f**ked up before and now it's more relaxed – not so many parties," he adds with a laugh.

The band has been a four piece since the departure of guitarist 'Cat Casino' in early 2013.

"Of course it's different," Bergh says, "but it's not that big a change. If it was then we'd continue as a five-piece. We've never even talked about it really, when Cat decided to stop touring. For us it was not really up for discussion."

Bergh is completely open to the idea of returning to a five-piece at some future time but is also content with keeping things as they are.

"Maybe in the future we will continue as a five-piece but right now it feels good," he says, adding that Deathstars did give some thought to how the change might impact their live show. "We asked our crew and so on what they thought and they've been very confident that we don't need a second guitar."

The Australian tour is a large part of the long tour cycle for *The Perfect Cult*, the band's fourth studio album released in the middle of 2014, and affords the lads an unmissable chance to gauge the reaction of Aussie fans

to the new songs.

"I'm not the kind of guy to read reviews or look at what people write," Bergh explains. "For me, it's about the response at the shows and, on the European tour, it's been a fantastic response." *The Perfect Cult* is undeniably a Deathstars record but it has a more introverted feel.

Bergh agrees: "It's not as outgoing as the other albums. It's slower, more melodic – it's not a party album – but it's been all good so far."

It's been six months since the album was released and Bergh remains happy with the final result of the recording.

"For the last album, *Night Electric Night*, there were maybe some things that were not 100 per cent," he admits, "so that was the idea behind *The Perfect Cult* – that we should be 100% about it. Right now I feel it's all good but maybe in one year when I have more perspective I might feel differently. Eventually you always want to change it I guess."

One of the standout songs is the title track, which captures the overall tone and vibe of the album perfectly.

"It's kind of a sarcastic title about worshipping something and that's the perfect cult," Bergh says, slightly cryptically. "In the end, it's a lot about Stockholm, or Stockholm noir so to speak, and the parties there, and it's about us and the perfect cult."

Bergh reflects momentarily and then adds, "It's kind of a depressing picture of the capital of Sweden really."

The mention of Sweden acts as a segue into another oft-discussed topic – the disproportionately large impact of Swedish music and bands upon the global music spectrum. For a country with a relatively small population, Sweden has produced a huge number of bands that have influenced music around the world. Bergh views this as a double-edged sword.

"That's why I moved to Italy," he laughs, "because in Sweden everyone is in a band. That's why I enjoy living here, because you can actually talk about other things. It's very relieving not living in Sweden just for the sake of that."

It's clearly a topic that hits home and Bergh gathers speed: "Everyone is in a band pretty much, especially in Stockholm. In Gothenburg everyone is in a death metal band! I think it started with ABBA and it's been an upward viral thing ever since. It's also irritating as hell; everyone is talking about music all the time!"

The Deathstars will get the chance to let their music talk for them soon enough. **H**

Words: Daniel Tucceri Photos: Stephanie Cabral



FEEL THE FEAR

'Powershifter'
@YouTube

FEAR FACTORY

IT'S NOT PERSONAL

Sometimes controversial, sometimes acrimonious, always heavy, Fear Factory's history is long and complex. Through it all Australia has played a leading role. Dino Cazares talks to Daniel Tucceri about punching on with band members and returning to a place they call home.

A hearty and typically nasal "G'day" greets me on the other end of the phone. For a split second, Dino Cazares had me going. Reverting to his natural Midwest twang, the Fear Factory guitarist explains he's always had a soft spot for 'Strine'.

"One of the biggest things that I love is the accent," he laughs before bastardising the Aussie accent once more. "I love the people with the thicker accent: 'Git a dawg up ya, mate!' We played Townsville and the accents were pretty f**kin' thick there."

Perhaps there's a reason vocalist Burton C. Bell is usually the one with the microphone.

Bad Australian accent aside, Cazares is nonetheless fond of his band's Australian fanbase: "Australia's the first country where we had a gold record [1995's *Demanufacture*]. *Obsolete* did as well [went gold] and so did *Digimortal*. So it was the first country that pretty much embraced Fear Factory and we'll never forget that."

So it's almost home, huh? "Yeah, it's one of those countries where we feel like it's a home away from home," Cazares says with much fondness.

Returning to Australia could not be more exciting for Dino as Fear Factory is slated to appear alongside industrial heavyweights Ministry and Godflesh at Soundwave 2015.

Cazares is quick to give kudos to Soundwave's controversial head honcho AJ Maddah for an "amazing" line-up.

"We're completely excited," the guitarist enthuses. "We've done shows here and there with Ministry and Godflesh but never at the same time."

Cazares punctuates his words like a man who knows what we're all thinking: that this is a once-in-a-lifetime gig and anyone who's so much as heard the Ministry classic *Jesus Built my Hotrod* would be a yutz to miss it.

"We're not only excited about playing in front of everybody and doing a killer show but also about seeing those bands playing," he adds.

Considering Ministry frontman Al Jourgensen's wild reputation, one would naturally assume a hell of a party is on the cards, right?

Cazares' hearty laugh obligates him to spill the beans but he keeps his answer suitably ambiguous: "He honestly lives just a few blocks from my house and we hang out every once in a while. A typical night out with Al Jourgensen? One, you're gonna get f**ked up; two, you're gonna hear some incredible stories."

Despite the impending chaos, things are pretty harmonious within the once fractious Fear Factory. It's no small secret that Cazares and Bell have clashed in the past. "It's been beaten over the head with a f**kin' hammer so many times," Cazares says but he also stresses that the conflict was over business rather than music. "We've grown; we've moved past that and it's not like we have to walk around eggshells with each other," he points out. "We're straight-forward and honest with each other and that's the only way to make it work."

For a full-time band, it's the only way to survive, Cazares continues: "Even if it's sometimes harsh or brutal, you still have to be honest and that's the only way to do it. We were combative back in the day but it was over something dumb. It was never about the music, we always pretty much saw eye-to-eye on creating music for Fear Factory."

Wouldn't there naturally be the occasional headbutting over ideas?

"That doesn't happen too much but when it does, I usually win," he laughs. "When it comes to concepts and talking about those sorts of subjects – we're both big sci-fi fans – anything he [Bell] comes up with I'm going to like anyway. There's not going to be much of a debate or any kind of conflict over music or lyrics; it's usually just a matter of trying to find space for all the ideas."

Cazares describes their upcoming album as a continuation of 2012's *The Industrialist*. "The *Industrialist* was about, for lack of better words, a robot or android. It's becoming more intelligent but every machine has a shelf-life. It wants to live longer and it's the battle of trying to find its creator to live longer."

Alas, that's as much as he's giving away for now and fans will have to wait until next year before the band coughs up any more details. [Goddamnit – Ed.] **H**

Words Callum Doig Photos: Courtesy of Soundwave

THE MANY SHADES OF WEDNESDAY 13

Wednesday 13's studio output is remarkably prolific. Now, with the release of his sixth solo album, the horror punk's many personalities come together to dominate Callum Doig with gory details of his own musical evolution.

Wednesday 13 has been the rock star for the living dead since his debut in the early '90s. Known as much for his work in Murderdolls and Frankenstein Drag Queens From Planet 13 as for his reputation as an undead party monster, the man has played many roles in the underground punk and metal scene. Above all, he is an accomplished solo artist with an expansive body of work.

Monsters of the Universe: Come Out and Plague is his sixth solo studio album and Wednesday 13 has a fair amount to say about how it went down.

"We set up two months of time to work on this and record it," he explains of the *Monsters of the Universe* sessions. "We went down to San Antonio with the rest of the band where they live and we recorded it for three and a half weeks then I went back to Los Angeles and recorded the vocals. I've recorded in LA for the past few years so it was cool to come down to Texas and record instead of my hometown."

Monsters of the Universe is also Wednesday 13's first concept work, somewhat surprising for an artist so heavily drenched in horror imagery but as he explains, writing a concept album required a very different approach to his usual method of composition.

"When I started writing for this record, I didn't have a concept story at all. I just started writing the songs the way I normally do," he explains, "but I remember going 'What's the difference between these songs and

what I did on the last record?' and I'm like 'Nothing!'"

In search of inspiration, the man turned his focus inward.

"Forbidden history books, UFO books, conspiracy theories... all of this crazy stuff [I was reading] and I thought, 'Why not write about all of this shit that I've been reading about for the past four or five years?'"

As he explains, changing direction was difficult to do, not unlike breaking character for the long-time horror punk.

"I thought, 'Oh man, I can't just switch gears like that in Wednesday 13 so how can I do it cleverly and make it work? I'll just make a concept record and make a story of all of these crazy things.'"

Concept albums are often complex creatures with twisting storylines filled with characters yet Wednesday 13 says *Monsters of the Universe* is a deliberate effort to avoid unwanted complexities and communicate a message to the listeners that's easy to follow.

"Even though it's a concept album, I wanted to be sure that you didn't have to really understand the story to get the songs; the songs can speak for themselves but if you do care about the story, I still wanted to make sure that it's easy to understand."

So what is this mysterious concept? Wednesday 13 has described it in other interviews as "a sci-fi horror story" that is a mix of the TV show *V* and the films *Night of the Living Dead* and *They Live*.

"Basically, what if you woke up one day and you found out everything that you knew, you learned and you grew up on was a complete lie?"

"We're just a heavy, weird, horror, space-rock band right now. Especially with this record, it's metal, it's rock, it's punk, it's goth – it's all over the place. There are no rules so I can't actually give myself a label for what we do."

heavy
feature

**MONSTERS OF THE UNIVERSE:
COME OUT AND PLAGUE**

3WISE RECORDS



One of horror punk's most iconic figures has returned from the grave to unleash a whole new hell-on-earth with his sixth studio record *Monsters of the Universe: Come Out and Plague*. Following a concept throughout the record, Wednesday 13 still remains loyal to his trademark heavy metal anthem-chanting, while also singing in a metaphorically narrative construct. The concept of the album isn't hard to follow as the songs easily interpret the story very well.

Tracks such as 'Keep Watching the Skies', 'Come Out and Plague', 'Planet Eater: Interstellar 187' and 'Monsters of the Universe' are all songs that show a differentiation from past albums while still executing a flawless balance of both Wednesday 13's older and newer approaches, which sync together seamlessly.

This is no doubt Wednesday 13's best achievement to date.



LOOK UP

'Keep Watching
the Skies'
@YouTube

Origin, history, everything," he asks, "and you take that into the aspect of your life and release a plate of the earth and an alien invasion on top of that and just imagine the chaos – that's what my concept story is."

Now reflecting back on the opus, he's ecstatic about the results.

"I couldn't be happier with it. It's a really cold, weird, dark, heavy record and it's beyond my expectations," he says excitedly. "I had so much fun doing this. I've been doing music for so long and I've put out so many things. I feel like I need to do something a little different at least to keep it fresh and entertaining, and this is what this record was for me. I hope it's still something that the fans can relate to."

To keep things fresh, artists need to evolve and there aren't many who've evolved as far as Wednesday 13. He pauses to ponder his evolution from young punk rocker to alternative metal star.

"It's been a constant. Evolution is what I do," he declares. "I mean, I started out back in the '90s, my punk band Frankenstein Drag Queens From Planet 13, and if you listen to that record and you listen to this new album, you can hear how far I've grown and the things I've learned."

Throughout his journey, the label horror punk has stuck with him and while Wednesday 13 acknowledges it, he refuses to allow it to define him completely.

"I don't even know what to call us – I'm a muck, I'm a muck of everything. I obviously get the horror punk thing but we're just a heavy, weird, horror, space-rock band right now," he laughs. "I just bring so many elements and different sounds of music into what we do. Especially with this record, it's metal, it's rock, it's punk, it's goth – it's all over the place. There are no rules so I can't actually give myself a label for what we do."

One thing of which he is sure is the strength of his recent output, which Wednesday 13 believes is career-best form: "The weirdest thing is I feel that, in the past few years, I've been at the top of my game where I feel confident in what I'm doing finally after all of these years. I feel like now is the best that we've ever done and it's the best music that I'm making right now."

Monsters of the Universe: Come Out and Plague is out now. **H**

Words: Jeremy Vane-Tempest Photo: John Raptis

DEAD CITY RUINS

THAT'S HOW IT GOES, PLAYING IN A BAND

If you want something, you've got to work for it. Jake Wiffen, vocalist of Melbourne-but-soon-to-be-German-based Dead City Ruins walks Jeremy Vane-Tempest through the dirty, underfed life of a touring rock 'n' roll band but don't expect any cocaine-fuelled benders on the road. That shit's expensive!

Seems that my mum was right: nobody likes a freeloader. A rock band that can be expected to make a viable financial return is very nearly a thing of the past and, if you even want a crack at it, you need to work your fingers to the goddamn bone. Melbourne rockers Dead City Ruins (DCR) may have just run a very successful Pozible campaign that netted almost twice the intended target but they aren't exactly snorting powdered seagull tears off the backs of prostitutes just yet.

"When we did the Skid Row tour in Europe, we weren't getting paid for the shows," vocalist Jake Wiffen explained. "We needed to fix a bunch of stuff on our tour van and chuck winter tyres on it; all the cash just went on stuff like that."

Wiffen believes the earning power of most rock bands is greatly overestimated by the public, and the costs involved in touring greatly underestimated.

"A lot of people don't realise how little bands get paid and how much we fork out," he explains. "We've just done our profit and loss sheet over the last three years and we could have bought a house, easily! We've

When in Rome, do as Mastodon do

Dead City Ruins thought they knew how to party... until they met Brent Hinds of Mastodon. DCR vocalist Jake Wiffen tells the story.

"We played a show with Mastodon in Rome. The venue relied on generators and no one had topped up the oil so the power started cutting out," Wiffen says. "The show was delayed so long that we were able to just chill with Mastodon and knock back some beers. Their guitarist, the one with the tattoo on his face, Brent, he's a drinking machine. We got to this venue in the morning and it was about 37 degrees. We dragged our stuff inside and collapsed in the green room and he already had a scotch in one hand and a beer in the other. He finished those, went and had a joint then came back with another beer and a scotch, and that went on all day. Then he went on stage high as a kite and pissed as a newt and nailed it."



RIDE ON
'Til Death'
@YouTube

done three tours of Europe, and we've also just done Indonesia, and it's ten grand just to fly to Europe. There are a lot of costs that go into it so having stuff like Pozible where you get cash from the fans is just a massive weight off our shoulders."

Fun fact: the band's Pozible campaign had one particular reward you don't see every day. For the princely sum of \$2,000, an individual could have his or her face tattooed onto the arse of the Dead City Ruins band member of their choice. Crowd-funding campaigns are open to some abuse though, as DCR hilariously discovered.

"Our old bass player's mates all got together and raised the cash for him to get the tattoo on his arse but then he cracked the shits and he didn't wanna do it anymore," Jake laughs. "He's not even in the band anymore so that makes it a bit hard. That wasn't why he left, though. Being in a band is a bit like being married to four hungry blokes in a van; it's not easy."

All of this should give you an idea of a band doing it tough on the road for the love of their craft, which is exactly why, come March, DCR are moving to Germany for twelve months to hit the comparatively-lucrative European club circuit in support of the record deal they just recently signed with German label Metalville.

"We get offers for shows seven days a week in Europe" Wiffen explains. "You can go there as an unknown band and play the pub circuit as a full-time job. There aren't enough cities in Australia to do that here. You have to head overseas at some point."

Signing to Metalville was an interesting choice and not a decision the band took lightly.

I've always been dubious about signing to a label but you can only

reach a certain level before you need label support," Wiffen adds. "We just wanted decent distribution in Europe. You could tour there for a hundred years but you'll be forgotten if you go home for six months without a record presence. We're looking for decent booking agents now too because it's the same deal – you can only go so far without them."

Speaking of cultural travesties, Melbourne is currently experiencing a number of venue closures. Wiffen has mixed feelings on the topic.

"I grew up in Wollongong where there no venues", he explains. "There were only a couple of pubs but there was a thriving punk scene. Everyone would chip in and hire a hall, book some bands, and bring a PA and some beer. The scene was healthy because the people were in it for love. So while it's terrible that venues are being closed down, and we need good venues, the market is way over-saturated and there isn't much of a rock scene. When fifty pubs are doing bands on a Saturday and only a thousand people are going, they're spread heaps thin. I'm not leaning either way; I just see both sides."

Wiffen's got some straight talk for all the bands out there who think that they can just fart out a career in a year or two: "There is absolutely no rhyme or reason to this industry. If you're not into this because you love music enough to sacrifice everything, don't f**king bother. You've gotta keep chipping away on the vague basis that the right guy might be in the audience one night and you get to meet him and you're not too f**king drunk to screw it all up. There's a very good chance that you won't get a result, even if you work your arse off. Look at us – we've toured Europe with Skid Row and we're still doing our own stuff. You don't get anywhere if you expect everyone else to do your work for you." ■





BE TERRORISED
"Welcome To Hell"
@YouTube

Words: Matt Doria Photo: Courtesy of 3Wise Records

TERROR UNIVERSAL INTRODUCING DARKNESS

Terror Universal is a new horror metal outfit featuring current and former members of Machine Head, Soulfly, and Ill Niño. Matt Doria recently sat down with drummer Massacre to discover the origin behind the psychopathic supergroup and to gather some details about the band's upcoming appearance at Soundwave XV.

The concept of the supergroup is a fickle one. On the one hand, supergroups have a tendency to be consumed by their oft-saturated hype and, regardless of how impressive the individual members are, the sum of their parts can be a disappointing affair. On the other hand, when you think about it, the supergroup is one of the most incredible things to happen in music. You get the feeling of watching three-to-four of your favourite bands at the same time and that's pretty goddamn awesome.

Featuring current and former members of Machine Head, Ill Niño and Soulfly, Terror Universal is the ultimate wet dream for discordant metalheads – they wear psychotically-deranged masks, have menacing alter egos and play some of the most unnerving horror metal the modern scene has witnessed.

"It has a little bit of something for everyone," begins Massacre, perhaps most known for his alter ego as current Ill Niño and former Soulfly drummer Dave Chavarri. "We want to do something cool and refreshing where we can have these alter egos, and not really worry about putting a staple on the band."

Joining him for the ride is Diabolus, current Ill Niño and former Machine Head guitarist Ahrue Luster. Still masked are vocalist Rott and guitarist Thrax, both of whose identities will be revealed in due time.

"We're going to let everyone know eventually but we're waiting until the record is released," Massacre says of his anonymous bandmates. "We have a game that we're setting up on our website where you can guess who they are and you'll be able to win merchandise if you guess correctly."

The origin behind Terror Universal began with the members' mutual love for horror movies and heavy metal.

"We started toying around with the idea about five months ago; we were talking about what avenues we wanted to take and how a project like this could have an impact on the public," Massacre explains. "We wanted to create a breadth of music that we all share a love for."

While horror metal isn't too far-fetched considering the styles of Ill Niño, Machine Head and Soulfly, Massacre declares that Terror Universal is a far cry from the riffs and roars we're all familiar with already.

"We are very conscious of music in general," he insists. "Being in the bands that we've already been in, we have a good handle of what would sound unoriginal so we try to stay away from that. We want to keep things fresh with Terror Universal and tap into something that's heavy and dark but, at the same time, completely original."

Just one day after their debut EP *Reign Of Terror* hits shelves, Terror Universal will make ears bleed and eyes explode (in a good way, of course) with the first in a string of murderous sets around Australia at the Soundwave Festival. "We're definitely going to have a killer stage show," Massacre teases. "We're a very theme-oriented band and we want to keep it that way. Things are gonna get dark and aggressive."

Pledging his appreciation to Soundwave creator AJ Maddah and AJ's own 3Wise Records, Massacre explains that the band are huge collective fans of Slipknot, Lamb Of God, Fear Factory and Ministry, all of whom are on the Soundwave 2015 bill.

"We love heavy music and we love aggressive punk music and some of these bands are pioneers for those styles," he says. "We're pumped to be sharing the stage with such incredible bands."

As for their setlist, Massacre promises the new record in full, as well as some yet-to-be-decided covers.

"It's really aggressive, really brutal, really dark and really gothic," Massacre says, of the *Reign of Terror* EP, which drops on February 20 and is sure to have fans swinging punches all over the shop with its violent ire and hauntingly demented push.

"[It's about] being a misfit and being mistreated, and saying 'Fuck you' in return," he continues in a voice bubbling with angst.

"Everybody's input in this band is unbelievably important because everyone carries their own weight," Massacre says of the contributions within Terror Universal. "What's cool about this band is that there are no egos, there's no attitude and there's really no arguments. We see eye-to-eye on everything concerning the band, our music and our recording processes."

Massacre believes it's that all-in attitude that makes Terror Universal work so well: "Between Diabolus, Rott, Thrax and myself, we all have a lot to say."

As for the future of Terror Universal, Massacre asserts that we won't see the project disappear anytime soon.

"This band started out as a side project in the first two months of inception but it's now become our main project," he announces. An explosion of international touring will consume most of Terror Universal's time in 2015, though Massacre declares that a full-length LP is in the works for a late 2015 to early 2016 release.

"We actually have an album almost fully written," he spills. "That's something we're still discussing amongst ourselves. We're thinking of releasing this EP and then a full-length album shortly thereafter as a 'part one, part two' type of thing." **H**



Words: Sheri Tantawy Art: Mark Riddick

FROM THE PEN OF MARK RIDDICK

Two to three decades ago, black and white illustrations reigned supreme and the illegible black/death logotype was on the rise. Standing in the middle of it all with pen in hand was Mark Riddick.

For over two years, PinUps has brought you an array of sophisticated graphic artists and illustrators encompassing the heavy music genre who listen to metal, love metal and draw really cool shit for metal. All of these artists have been very glossy, high colour and highly-detailed. This issue we're taking a trip back to the early nineties when black and white illustrations reigned supreme, the magic was in the ink and beauty could be found in the melted flesh dripping from a maggot-filled eye socket. This was the dawn of a new age and Mark Riddick was right in the centre of it.

A passionate artist from a very young age, Riddick answered his calling when he was introduced to the underground death metal scene. After networking with underground bands, fanzines and record labels via snail mail, Riddick welcomed opportunities to illustrate logos, demo cassette tape covers, 7" EP covers and the fanzines. He worked pro-bono in exchange of having his work published.

Eventually record labels and artists of note came calling and he contributed work for Grave, Morbid Angel and Suffocation yet Riddick resisted the call of mainstream metal where possible.

"I consider it an honour to see my work on their shirts but my passion really does lie with the underground scene," he says of working with large, international bands.

Since those beginnings, the highlights of his career are many, including illustrations for Dethklok, the animated band from Adult Swim's *Metalocalypse*.

Riddick's favourite projects to date are those that offer different themes, challenges and directions.

"Some illustrations are easier and more fun to execute whereas others can be exhausting and cumbersome," he explains. "Every once in a while I'll get a request outside the realm of predictability – I've been asked to illustrate a vehicle in my own style for Volvo automobiles! These are often the highlights of my career."

At the time of this interview, Riddick's latest CD-cover illustration is for Mexican band Seperfu; it's a brilliantly disgusting rendering of flesh and muscle melting over bones into crisp bed sheets beneath a skeleton. Tasty.

This grotesque impression of live decay has been something of a hit for him, generating the most traffic and praise on social media than any of his other illustrations. He's still surprised it generated ►►

so much appreciation given it was actually the least favourite of the two designs he presented to Seperfu.

"It's difficult to judge what people are going to enjoy and what they won't," he says. "Although there is a logic to good art and design, the greater portion of it is left to subjectivity and personal preference – a difficult thing to measure."

As far as process goes, things haven't changed much for Riddick since those early days: "Everything is still done by hand – pen on paper – until the artwork is fully inked."

Then comes the scanner and minor edits in PhotoShop to prepare the document for pre-press.

"My current tools include Sakura brand products, such as their Micron pens, brushes and gel pens," he says. "I also use Sharpie markers to fill the black space in my illustrations."

His style has remained consistent throughout the ever-evolving face of heavy metal artwork and he has outlasted trends that have come and gone – fractal art of the early 2000s, I'm looking at you! This doesn't mean that Mark's style is stagnant; there is still room for improvement and, as he explains, reinvention doesn't necessarily mean changing styles.

"Indeed my work has remained fairly consistent during the past two decades but I have grown as an illustrator and my skill level has increased," he explains. "I stay on the path of black and white illustrations because I've adopted this as my visual identity and it's a way for me to stay true to my roots as an artist."

Riddick's work is a constant homage to when his art could

only be reproduced in black and white via photocopied fanzines and demo covers. He is always looking for new challenges and is pushed most by clients who give him complete free reign. In that environment, he explores new themes and techniques to realise the clients' visions.

"Art is a craft that is never really mastered; the curiosity of how a piece might turn out or what will come next helps to keep me motivated."

There are big plans for the future. Riddick is preparing a 300-page hardcover art book titled *Morbid Visions Volume 1*. In addition, he has completed a 600-page hardcover book called *Logos from Hell*, featuring the logo illustration work of over thirty artists from the underground scene. It's scheduled to be out later this year via Doomentia Records.

When I ask Riddick what words of wisdom he might bestow upon other young gore-getters – see what I did there? – his response is horrific: don't sleep.

"I wake up early almost every day around 4:45am, go to work, get home around 5pm, make dinner, engage my kids and wife, get the kids to bed around 8pm, and then spend time on my second job as a freelance artist until around midnight," he explains of his punishing schedule.

Clearly his drive is only surpassed by his passion: "Be passionate about your craft. It is the most important key to being successful."

Also, don't forget having good customer service, a strong network and a consistent visual identity. Sleep is always optional. **H**



Mark lives with his beautiful wife and two kids in a picturesque part of the United States. He doesn't like long walks on the beach or holding hands. He also doesn't like colour. Check out his band Fetid Zombie at fetidzombie.bandcamp.com. Sheri Tantawy is a Melbourne based graphic artist lecturing at SAE Qantm Creative Media Institute. For more on Mark Riddick, check out www.riddickart.com

Words: Karl Lean Photo: Ville Juurikkala



SOUND THE ALARM

"Shadowmaker"
@YouTube

APOCALYPTICA

THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY

World-renowned three-cello metal band Apocalyptica have long struggled to find a stable vocalist... until now. Cellist Perttu Kivilaakso talks to Karl Lean about the band's latest acquisition: Franky Perez.

Finland's Apocalyptica have hit the ground running in 2015. Ahead of the release of their eighth studio album *Shadowmaker* in April, they've already been part of the 70,000 Tons of Metal cruise and are heading to Australia for the first time in three years to storm the stages of Soundwave.

For cellist Perttu Kivilaakso, the excitement of touring in support of a new release is already building.

"We have a major release coming now where we've worked with such an amazing producer in Nick Raskulinecz," he says, "and then coming to Australia is perfect. The last trip I have such fond memories, so beautiful and it feels amazing going totally to the other side of the world and realising there were people who knew our band."

Although the album won't be out until after the festival, the band is ready to start bringing some of the new material into the set.

"It's exciting to play the new material and see how the fans react," Kivilaakso says.

The title track 'Shadowmaker' has been available on iTunes for a while now and will be part of the set list and Kivilaakso expects they'll add at least one more new song. "Cold Blood" will be the first radio single and will be released by the time we come to Australia," he explains, "so we will probably play that one as well."

For the new album, the band clearly feel they've taken their sound to a new level. Kivilaakso has a simple explanation for this – preparation.

"We are so amazed by the sound, so proud about the product. The first time I listened to the mix I didn't believe that this was our band. It was like 'Can some guys from Finland who play cellos sound like this? This is world class,'" he says. "We have always had to search for how to use cellos with guitars in rock music; we don't make a plan for 'Let's sound this way or that way' but this time we wanted to be 100 per cent sure that, when we started to record, we knew everything that we were doing. We were practicing so much last year, just playing and playing our asses off."

A key part of this intense approach to the recording sessions was to go through a full pre-production phase, something they had never done before.

"We wanted to be so prepared. We didn't want to fool around so we had ten days rehearsing with Nick in his studio before we started."

The other big factor at play with the new album are the vocal duties. For the first time, the band decided to use just one singer for the entire album rather than the usual approach of gathering a host of guest vocalists.

"We wanted to get back to the real things that we feel is Apocalyptica,

and that is the cellos," Kivilaakso explains. "We felt that with previous albums it was always about explaining who is your guest and why did you work with them. Always it was about bringing in some cool stars and I loved working with every single one of them but this time we felt we wanted to put the focus onto the music."

After much discussion they decided the best way to achieve this was to find their own vocalist for the new album. They quietly put the word out and it eventually brought them to American singer Franky Perez.

"We were really lucky bastards getting a guy like Franky; he's an amazing vocalist, capable of singing in so many different styles and a humble human being as well," Kivilaakso beams. "One of the key elements for us was to find a vocalist we could bring everywhere for tours. It sounds so stupid that we've had beautiful guests every time but we've never been able to play those tracks live with those singers, except for one-off moments."

With career sales of some five million albums, it has been a remarkable story of success for a band that occupies a unique niche in the metal spectrum. Kivilaakso sees their success in very direct terms.

"We have just been honest with ourselves; we want to make music that we would love to hear," he insists. "I've always thought that if I like something or the music touches me, I cannot be the only one. But even I am wondering sometimes how is it possible that I am a classical cello player from Finland and I get to play around the world."

A band fronted by three cello players has obvious classical influences. For Kivilaakso it is a perfect blending of styles.

"I enjoy both. I didn't do any classical stuff for over 10 years, but now in the last couple of years I have been trying to challenge myself and have been holding classical concerts every now and then. I love music and I love all kinds of music so I have a need to do both. For me, I don't even separate them so much. The emotion and intention are the same. When we are doing the heavy metal cello we want to have the variety of classical music."

On a personal level the move to rock/metal from his classical roots was an easy one, despite the initial surprise of his friends and family.

"At the time I was doing quite a lot of classical concerts and it had been very clear I would follow a classical road, so there was a lot of shock," he recalls. "But really quickly my parents realised the passion I have for the group and ever since they have been following along. They come to all the concerts they can."

Shadowmaker will be released worldwide on April 15. **H**

Words: Daniel Tucceri Photos: Nick Lord

TRADING INSULTS WITH THE KILL

Smashing speakers, smashing eardrums – what's the f**king difference?! Grind stalwarts The Kill meet up with Daniel Tucceri to share what it's like to kill them... all.

Australian prime minister Tony Abbott's nauseating laugh opens The Kill's latest LP *Kill Them... All* before blackened minor chords and unrelenting blast beats rain sonic napalm on the listener. On top of it all, vocalist Nik Kennedy spews nuggets of the Aussie vernacular more often heard in suburban footy ground carparks before the song closes with sampled audio of a heckler delivering an impassioned vocal tirade against the PM in the streets of Canberra.

Though The Kill formed in 2000, *Kill Them... All* is only their second full-length album.

"It's because of Curby!" guitarist Roby Polzella explains, pointing to Obscene Extreme Festival boss Miroslav 'Curby' Urbanec as the reason why the band broke step with their long-held tradition of releasing 'splits' to put out a 10-track record. "I'm not releasing nothing unless it's a full-length album," Polzella says, mimicking Curby's frog-throated Czech brogue. "He's cracked the shits with us!" Polzella continues, breaking into character once more: "Mini CD will not sell!"

Drummer and blast maniac Jay Jones is more diplomatic, stating that the material on hand determined the length of the release: "We had the songs; we just had to get them all together."

Jones is an imposing figure but the most reserved of the three in

person. Watching him onstage is a different story. It's like seeing an old Kingswood with a 350 Chevy engine run a quarter mile in eight seconds; you know it shouldn't be possible but it is.

As they smash a stereo to smithereens in an abandoned petrol station 5km west of Melbourne, the setting sun casts an eerie shadow over the members of The Kill. Talk turns to the making of the record. After recording at Goatsound with HEAVY's own Jason Fuller, the real fun started in post-production.

With a European tour on the cards, there was a rush to have the album finished in time but things didn't entirely go to plan. Despite employing the services of grind legend Scott Hull (Agoraphobic Nosebleed, Pig Destroyer), the band wasn't entirely pleased with the end result.

"We heard it in the car and it just sounded like a tin," Polzella says. "I heard it at home and it just sounded like an overproduced mega-slam f**kin'... God knows what it was; it was just wrong!"

Wanting it done right, Polzella decided to take the project on himself. "I knew what I wanted to hear and what these guys like," he declares, glancing sideways at his fellow assassins. "One wants to hear everything, one wants it dirty and angry and I'm in the middle of both."

"We heard it in the car and it just sounded like a tin," Polzella says. "I heard it at home and it just sounded like an overproduced mega-slam f**kin'... God knows what it was; it was just wrong!"

All very well in theory but a bit tougher to put into practice, according to the animated guitarist. "It [the mastering process] did my head in," he admits. "I did a lot of research and did a hundred different things."

Getting the right sound meant taking a crash course in mastering and going through more blank CDs than a Balinese Video Ezy but the final result is an album that has pushed both the band and their fans outside their comfort zones. "We've had some good reviews but we've also had some people complaining about Nik's vocals. 'Oh, no more cookie monster!'" Polzella says without the faintest hint of giving a shit. "I like the fact you can hear what Nik says; it sounds like he's a f**kin' full blown yob!"





SIK 'EM
'Insults'
@Bandcamp

Where Polzella is outspoken and unafraid to account for gaps in conversation, Kennedy is comparatively subdued. Even when our photographer [that's editor to you, Tucceri! – Ed.] encourages him to sneer for the camera, he struggles with even the faintest curl of the lip. It's a bizarrely endearing quality and slightly disconcerting if you've ever seen him onstage screaming like an angry kid in 'time out'.

Kennedy admits to aiming for 'Aussie-like' vocals and being inspired by Sadistik Exekution. "They [SadEx] were saying that all these death metal bands just copy all the European and American bands from the early nineties and they wanted to make death metal that sounds Australian." Just like those elder statesmen of all things fukked, The Kill are all about playing ten times faster than anyone else. Where Polzella aimed "for a punk feel for this album", Jones notes "a lot of thrash influences".

"I think there's a bit of everything," Kennedy points out. "Straight up grind, punky stuff, black metal."

Literally, The Kill is just as eclectic. "It's because Roby's out deep in the western suburbs and he sees a lot of things that inspire him," Kennedy chimes in with tongue firmly planted in cheek.

'Instant Fighter' is about "that guy who will do gym and instantly can fight" as Polzella puts it, while 'Heavy Metal Professionals' are those who come out whenever an international band visit but are in scarce quantity at local gigs.

"Pig Destroyer play and all these guys come out of the closet that I've never seen in my life," Polzella describes with a dismissive shake of the head. "They think they know the scene inside out when they couldn't name one Pig Destroyer song."

Kennedy admits the scene has changed during his time.

"It's really different to when I first started going to gigs in 2002. There was a really solid group of grind bands that all knew each other; it felt a lot more like a community at that time," he says with a tinge of nostalgia. "All the gigs I go to lately, there is rarely ever an all-grind bill. It's grind bands with hardcore and punk bands."

That isn't to say there's a shortage of quality grind in Australia.

"One inspirational band for me lately over the last few years is Internal Rot. They've just totally nailed the old school sound," Kennedy points out, prompting his band mates to nod approvingly.

Provocative to the end, Kennedy suggests the scene might be changing because the new kids can't keep up: "All the younger dudes are playing much more hardcore punk with a lot less straight grind. Maybe there's not enough drummers that can play that fast?"

There's a bit of a truth in that joke, considering the amount of bands that share drummers.

"They're not even as old as I am; I've got an excuse!" Jones quips, seemingly unaware that neither he nor his partners in grind need one.

As the band look forward to possible tours in New Zealand and Japan, *Kill Them...* All is slated for vinyl release on no fewer than six different labels. Local fans can expect to see a launch soon but, much like the federal election, an exact date isn't on the cards yet.

Odds are it'll happen sooner than we get a new prime minister. **H**



Words: Callum Doig Photo: Courtesy of Soundwave



BAYSIDE

LIVING THE CULT LIFE

Bayside aren't your average punk and alternative ensemble. Employing a devastating combination of rock-solid riffage and tidy songwriting, the New York quartet has entranced punk and rock fans alike with their relentless fusion of alternative, punk and hard rock.



PUNK IT UP

'Pigsty'
@YouTube

Chatting with founding member Anthony Raneri, it's easy to see that he and the band are ecstatic about their third Soundwave appearance.

"Oh, can't wait!" Raneri enthuses. "It'll be our third time doing the festival, and I can't wait. It's really fun to get to Australia because it's one of the places in the world where we're only able to go once every couple of years."

Raneri speaks highly of the festival, ranking it as one of his favourites. "Soundwave is such a nice place because they treat the bands so well, you get to hang out with friends and you get to see a lot of cool bands. Definitely, I'm excited to see Faith No More and Soundgarden for sure. Soundgarden will be super cool – I remember being in the sixth grade and listening to Superunknown and wanting to be in that band."

It's Bayside's third appearance at Soundwave – they were here in 2009 and 2011 – and the boys almost consider it a home away from home.

"I think 2009 really summed up what Soundwave is about for us," Raneri says. "We wound up hanging out with Lamb Of God a lot and becoming good friends with those guys. It's a great example of what a festival is supposed to be about – it's a new experience, and everybody who goes on that tour is just looking to hang out."

There's always something a band plans to do whenever they're on a break during the weeks of the festival, and plenty of bands get up to some crazy activities when they're not onstage but Raneri has humble expectations:

"This will be our fourth time in Australia, and I have still yet to go to the beach," he laughs. "I just haven't had the time so I gotta get to the beach this time because I know you guys have great beaches." Bayside's current world tour has seen the band book a mix of festival and headline shows. As fun as festivals can be, Raneri's preference is always to headline club shows.

"We like to headline. Our headline tours are always fun because we get to take out our friends for some kind of a big hangout," he says, adding that it's also a special moment to be invited to tour with bands the band admires.

"We actually just got back from Europe supporting The Gaslight Anthem and that was a pretty interesting tour for us," Raneri adds. "I mean Gaslight's pretty big internationally but in Europe they're absolutely enormous, and a lot of the shows are in arenas."



“Everybody has that band they loved who one day just stopped sounding like themselves and I never wanted to be that band – we always wanna sound like Bayside but we wanna be the best version of *Bayside* and we want every record to improve on what we already do.”

Bayside’s brand new album *Cult* has been getting positive feedback from critics across the world and Raneri ranks it among the band’s best. [no surprises there – Ed.]

“It’s been so awesome,” Raneri says of the response to *Cult*. “Out of the 15 years we’ve been touring and putting out records, my proudest moment is right now. The fans love the new record and the tours are now the biggest they’ve ever been.”

Raneri is most appreciative of the longevity of the band’s enduring fanbase.

“To think that the music we made 15 years ago meant so much to our fans that they’ve stuck around this long, that’s what I’m proud of most about being in this band.”

The process of recording *Cult* really pulled the band out of their comfort zone, mostly because they had to overcome the challenge of geographical separation. “*Cult* was really interesting for us. We live all over the country now and do

a lot of travelling in our off-time so we spent a lot of time apart,” Raneri explains. “When we wrote this record, we did a lot of it with home recordings – we’d write things at home and then email them to each other and you’d get someone’s idea and you’d elaborate on that. We did most of the writing that way and then we got together in New York and demoed a bunch of the songs. We’d then go back home, write some more, get together again and demo some more.”

The process ensured the band was particularly well prepared when the time came to record the album.

“By the time we got in the studio, we’d spent so much time demoing and writing on our own that we knew exactly where the record was going and what it was going to sound like. We recorded the album in 14 days, which is pretty crazy for us.”

Preserving the band’s sound was important and *Cult* is definitely still a Bayside record.

“As far as the sound goes, we have always set out to sound like Bayside,” Raneri explains. “Everybody has that band they loved who one day just stopped sounding like themselves and I never wanted to be that band – we always wanna sound like Bayside but we wanna be the best version of Bayside and we want every record to improve on what we already do.”

To Raneri, the improvement in the band’s songwriting on *Cult* is obvious to all.

“I think that we’re getting better at song writing; we’re just becoming better craftsmen,” he says. “I know I have definitely been getting better at visualising a song, knowing how I want it to sound and being able to pull it off; I’m able to write songs in my head now.”

All that’s left now is to bring the material to the Soundwave stage. Raneri is naturally aware of the impact that *Cult* has had in Australia and is expecting a great turnout at the forthcoming shows.

“Whenever there’s a new record, you only hope that the fans like it,” he says, adding that the toughest part is deciding what songs to include on the set list. “We only play for about a half hour [each time at Soundwave] so, with six records out, it’s pretty hard to put just a half-hour set together. I guess we’re just gonna go and do our thing and hope you like it.”

Cult is out now through all available retailers. **H**





Words: Will Oakeshott Photos: Matt Allan

CONFESSION DOING IT TOUGH

Confession are riding high on recent release *Life and Death* but vocalist Michael Crafter has, in many ways, had a year to forget. He reveals to Will Oakeshott just some of the obstacles he's been forced to overcome in the past year.

On occasion it is possible to overlook the fact that some of the most admired music personalities are also very much human. From an outsider's perspective, vocalist Michael Crafter is almost revered among the worldwide hardcore community for his work with I Killed the Prom Queen, Carpathian, Bury Your Dead and now Confession, the band he formed in 2008 and who just released *Life And Death*, the most-accomplished of their three full-length albums, in 2014. Below the surface of that public persona, however, lies a father, son and man who endured more turmoil and uncertainty in 2014 alone than many would in a lifetime.

"It's crazy because last year was the worst year ever," Crafter reveals with a vulnerable openness. "I split with my daughter's mum, lost my dad and continued to deal with my mum's cancer and not knowing what's happening next with that. Going from seeing my daughter every day to now only a few days a week added to the struggle; it was all really hard to deal with."

Crafter responded in the only way he knows how, by throwing himself headlong into his music.

"Playing shows and just being around friends helped a lot," he adds. "Music is great like that; even when life gets so bad, you can listen to some music, get on stage or write some songs and it does help even at the worst of times. Sometimes putting pen to paper or, in my case, notes in my iPhone helps me get a lot off my chest."

Crafter learnt that both his parents had cancer right around the same time that Confession were departing for California to record the band's third full-length. Understandably, he hit an all-time low, unable to find the strength to complete the writing and recording process. To overcome this state of near incapacity, Crafter poured his feelings into his lyrics. "F**k Cancer" were literally the first two words written for the album and together they form the title of the album's lead single, which has been adopted by the global hardcore community as something of an anthem. Consequentially, the response has projected both Confession to the limelight and Crafter to the position of spokesperson for sufferers of the disease, a role he seems to be relishing.

"I think it really just keeps cancer in peoples' minds and shows how it can affect anyone," he says of the single. "My focus has been to help people maintain a positive mindset. There's no easy way to get ready for something or deal with anything like cancer but it needs to be reinforced that people suffering from the disease, or friends or family members of these people, know that they are not alone. I try to talk to everyone who

writes to me every day if I can. My advice is always to stay positive, brace yourself for the worst and continually hope for the best."

Obviously a fragile and controversial topic like this oft-fatal illness can stir up a range of emotions, which is precisely what happened when Crafter plastered the streets in "F**k Cancer" posters promoting the single. A backlash followed, mainly because of the profane language of the public posters, and Crafter wound up defending the decision on Neil Mitchell's popular talkback radio show on Melbourne's 3AW. Back then his message was clear: "If I upset a few people, I'm sorry but I've gotta say what I've gotta say. At the end of the day, it's a real positive song about a really dark subject that has confronted me in the last few years."

To this day, Crafter is similarly defiant, insisting the single has done much to raise awareness about cancer and to give sufferers a voice.

"The radio station 3AW had a lot to say before they spoke to me on air in an interview," he recalls. "Honestly, I shut them down with the exact reason why we are saying what we are."

Momentum continues to build for the moshcore quintet, which contains mostly new musicians after a bizarre incident in 2012 when members of the band allegedly tried to sack Crafter only for him to seize control of Confession's online pages and reverse the decision, firing all of his bandmates in the process. [It's all very Queensrÿche, really - Ed.]

The five-piece has been touring round regional Australia, pausing only to support emotional melodic metalcore champions The Amity Affliction and to play Unify: A Heavy Music Gathering. The next step is the elusive Soundwave festival, which contains only a small number of Australian acts and yet Confession have been added to the entire run of that tour.

"Honestly it's the busiest we have been in ages. We had a lot of short runs but nothing solid in quite some time," Crafter says of the recent spate of shows, adding about Soundwave, "I'm excited to see Fall Out Boy and Slipknot every chance I get."

Given Crafter's extensive touring experience across four different bands, does he have a favourite festival?

"Soundwave or Big Day Out, I think," he says after some thought. "Both are really good and well-run festivals. Soundwave is top notch and everyone's really helpful with making sure we are sweet and sorted every day."

Will international tours follow Soundwave? Crafter baulks. "Not anytime soon, just because mentally I don't think I can handle it with so much going on," he says before throwing a lifeline to his international fans. "The right time will come and we will head back over to Europe or



"My focus has been to help people maintain a positive mindset. There's no easy way to get ready for something or deal with anything like cancer but it needs to be reinforced that people suffering from the disease know that they are not alone."

A softening single

Life and Death lead single 'F**k Cancer' is a tough hardcore tune that hits a difficult topic head-on. Second single 'March 23' is an about-face for the band, however, shifting the focus onto Crafter's own daughter and showing the confrontational singer's softer side.

"I think that song is my favourite because Kennedy is my world," Crafter says of 'March 23' and his daughter. "She's my best friend and I love spending every moment with her."

This video shows the band playing in a burning house, which Crafter describes as "an amazing experience" but a setting that regrettably meant his daughter couldn't be involved in the shoot.

"As for the clip, it was wild; the flames and the old house being set on fire was an amazing experience," he explains. "The only thing I wish we did differently was I wish she could have been featured in it somehow."



GET INVOLVED

'F**k Cancer'
@YouTube



GET SADISTIK

'Fukked Up and Buried'
@YouTube

Words: Sam Bean Photos: Courtesy of Osmose Productions

SADISTIK EXEKUTION PAST BLASTERS

In my opinion, the mark of a good extreme metal band is whether or not, on first being exposed to the band and their music, your reaction is laughter. If so, it could therefore be argued that Sadistik Exekution were the greatest extreme band on the planet. Hell, 20 years on from my first listen, I'm still laughing – I'm listening to their song 'Fukked Up and Buried' right now, which I strongly suggest you play immediately, and laughing so hard I can barely type.

Sadistik Exekution were an utterly ridiculous Sydney-based death-metal outfit from the '80s who staked out a position as the most extreme band in Australia and then held that position against all comers for at least a decade. Every single aspect of the band – the speed, the music, the song titles and not least the personalities – were turned up to eleven.

SadEx, the nickname by which the band was best known, were the benchmark for brutal and they still stand out for being haircurlingly horrible to this day.

This is a world where the blastbeats never stop, where there are no breakdowns, where the riffs are frantic and complex, the music chaotic and the vocals sound like someone fed a special-needs dude some PCP and dust.

There are absolutely no verses or choruses, no real structure and although the band called themselves death metal, the music can sometimes come across like grindcore, other times like black metal and occasionally like a bucketload of avant-garde WTF. Their musicianship can even be viewed as masterful depending how far over the event horizon of extreme you live.

Sam Bean tells the story of a handful of early death metal mental-cases from Sydney who become benchmarks in seminal Aussie extreme metal.



At one point between songs, he repeatedly screamed, “You f**king mongrel poofter, you f**king mongrel poofter bastard” at the entire audience for about five minutes.

I saw SadEx play at the HiFi in Melbourne back in the ‘90s. Matty Skitz from Damaged was drumming for them at the time; the guitarist Reverend Kriss Hades had inserted dozens of safety pins into his arm; the singer Rok moaned and screamed and staggered around the stage punching himself in the head. At one point between songs, he repeatedly screamed “You f**king mongrel poofter, you f**king mongrel poofter bastard” at the entire audience for about five minutes. Throughout it all, Dave Slave, the curious-looking bald-headed bassist, kept unsuccessfully trying to adjust his mic stand and was getting progressively angrier and demented. Rok spat on Dave. Dave spat back on Rok. Kriss put his guitar behind his head and peeled off a blistering solo but lost his balance and staggered across the stage, nearly twatting Rok in the head. It was the most retarded spectacle I had ever witnessed. I watched the entire set but only recognized one of their songs: ‘The Magus’. The rest of the performance was nothing but a wall of blasting and screaming.

Rok and Dave were the core of the band, forming roughly in 1986. From the sounds of it, crazy met crazy and it was love at first sight. They used Slaughter Lord guitarist Sandy Vahdanni in the beginning but Kriss Hades soon took over. Sloth was the drummer for the majority of the time when he wasn’t quitting the band, which happened almost weekly, and on other occasions Steven ‘The Mechanic’ Hoban took a quick turn at the kit and Skitz jumped on for a brief but important touring period.

SadEx released *The Magus* through Aussie label Vampire Records in 1991 then got into a fight with them over CD printing and money. They sent their next album to Osmose Productions who reportedly congratulated them on their black metal ruckus and offered to release it. SadEx sent the master tapes through with a note protesting their designation as a black metal band: “We are Death... Fukk You!”

Osmose took that to be the album title and released it as such. The band did a European tour then released their masterpiece *K.A.O.S.* in 1997, the subtly-titled *Fukk* in 2002 and their swansong *Fukk II* in 2004.

Sounds relatively straightforward, right? What I’m leaving out here is all the details. You see, Sadistik Exekution would have to be the most difficult band to write a retrospective column about. There are so many unbelievable stories swirling about them that you don’t know what’s fact or what’s bullshit – everything about them sounds made up. All the band members were masters of self-promotion and their personalities are so far out there you wonder sometimes if it’s all a put-on but there’s plenty of gnarly stuff on the public record.

They promoted themselves for almost five years before they played a show; second drummer Steve Hoban broke his back

stage-diving at a Bolt Thrower gig; they toured Europe with Absu and Impaled Nazarene where Dave Slave lost it on the tour bus halfway through tour and fought everyone; Kriss broke his hand bashing Dave and ended up having pins put in his hand and ankle, making him even more metal – he still played the rest of the tour; a bomb threat was called in to a domestic gig in Bexley and the gig went ahead anyway; Rok and Dave appeared in *Penthouse*, *People*, *Picture* and *Post* magazines; Dave appeared in a chip commercial and the Red Faces segment on *Hey Hey It’s Saturday*, where he smashed a \$3000 bass and gonged himself off; Sloth appeared on the TV show *Wife Swap*; Rok appeared on *Good Morning Australia*; and SadEx were booked to play the old-school Canberra festival *Metal For the Brain* then had to cancel when Dave broke his leg in a pub fight while trying to take on three guys at the same time.

Please keep in mind these are the stories I can at least partially verify. I’m not even beginning to tap the massive well of legend surrounding these guys but the stories get pretty severe. I sometimes fantasize about SadEx being on a tour-bus travelling America with one of these modern-day excuses for metal bands like *Attack Attack!* – they’d never find the bodies.

In one explosive career, Sadistik Exekution put the Australian underground squarely on the map. In terms of weirdness and extremity, they ploughed a path followed by domestic acts such as *Portal*, and echoes of their caveman musical approach can be heard in the likes of *Bestial Warlust* and *Destroyer 666* and any band that classifies itself as ‘war metal’.

Any overseas discussion of metal in Australia will include their name despite them being largely defunct for over a decade. With the sheer power of their antics, they kicked on the door of the mainstream with some of the most excruciatingly f**ked music this country has produced. Their very existence is testament to a time when extreme metal wasn’t populated by children with haircuts and production values. Australia is known in the global metal community as the country that keeps coughing up mutant-level extreme insanity bands and SadEx laid that foundation in the ugliest, heaviest, noisiest and most disgusting way possible.

There’ll never be another like them. **H**

THE SICK LEGACY OF SADISTIK EXEKUTION



- 1991 – *Suspiral* (demo)
- 1991 – *The Magnus*
- 1994 – *We are Death...Fukk You!*
- 1999 – *K.A.O.S.*
- 2001 – *Fukk*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?! Outside of the group, the SadEx members created a large body of underground work – Kriss Hades joined Naxxul then performed later with his self-titled band *The Reverend Kriss Hades*; Dave Slave is currently working on a solo project called *Doomed And Disgusting* and releases YouTube videos of himself playing bass stupidly fast; Rok did his own self-titled project for a while and paints crazy artworks of shit covered in spikes; Sloth played in *Meridian* and countless other bands. Seriously, is this what I’ve come to? Writing a piece on SadEx’s place in Australia’s musical history? F**k me.

OZ
UNDERGROUND

Vyrion

Words: Jeremy Vane-Tempest Photo: Millyjane Photography

Australia is the sunniest country in the world so you know a place is pretty sunny when it's an Australian region called the Sunshine Coast. And what's not synonymous with the sun or the beach-oriented culture that goes hand in hand with any coastal town? Black metal. No one has ever thrown on a Satyricon or Behemoth record and immediately felt the urge to go surfing – surfing on an arctic sea of blood maybe but not on the waters of a sub-equatorial paradise – and yet black metal band Vyrion made their start in this tourist trap before heading south to take advantage of the established metal scene of BrisVegas.

Vyrion was conceived in 2007 purely so the members could play shows at then-thriving Brisbane venue Rosie's. They achieved that goal pretty quickly and have since racked up an impressive resume of support slots for such metal luminaries as Enslaved, Ruins, Psycroptic, The Amenta, Portal and Marduk – the band considers that last one a particular highlight.

Line-up changes are an unavoidable part of being in a band, especially one in such a confrontational, unsociable genre as black metal. Vocals that sound like Gollum having an asthma attack combine with wailing guitars and endless double kick to create a cacophony that is damn near radio-proof no matter how proficient the musicians are. Inevitably, someone gets sick of making no money, being away from home for ages, playing to empty rooms or any of a million things and leaves. In fact, Vyrion is training up yet another drummer right at this very moment whose identity shall remain a secret until such time as he (or she) is fit for duty.

These line-up changes may have stalled Vyrion's development somewhat but they haven't succeeded in ending the band's tenure, which now encompasses the better part of a decade. Helping things along has been the overwhelmingly positive critical reception that greeted their brilliant 2014 effort *Geo*, which found its way onto a few best-of-year lists.

Vyrion readily admit that they enjoy crafting albums. The writing, the structuring, the

compositional stuff – that's the stuff they love and it's the mark of a true musician when the writing process is a joy in and of itself.

Both *Geo* and their 2011 self-titled effort from which they derive their name were produced and distributed internally. Guitarist Dale Williams both mixed and mastered *Geo* and he has recorded and produced records for a number of other Brisbane metal bands.

Inquisition, Immortal and Opeth are all bands that have influenced Vyrion and guided them to their current state. Their sound is an aggressive one, forged in the hellfire of nihilistic hatred and honed by their black metal predecessors; however, Vyrion take a heavy, death-tinged approach to their music that allows for more sonic exploration than if they limited themselves to traditional black metal.

Lyricaly, there isn't as much deviation. Vyrion's lyrics are inspired by, and derived from, ancient literary epics like *Beowulf*. They are not limited to books, however, and use cinema as a powerful propaganda tool, weaving their anti-theistic parables into staggeringly huge tales that encourage others to abandon their religion in favour of a life devoid of dogmatic limitations.

Not yet satisfied, Vyrion claims to be already writing material for a new album. This may not mean they're going to hunker down in the studio to record over the summer but it does mean they're gonna muck around with riffs between sound checks and maybe record any half decent ones on their phones. As mentioned above, Vyrion have a new mystery member on drums that they've got to try out in the live environment to see if they can replicate their practice-space stick skills so we'll have to wait and see how that goes.

Fans can expect to see them on the road again by the second half of 2015 to promote *Geo*, so get out there and see Vyrion bring their Godless ways to the masses and etch their names on the walls of eternity... and hop on over to bandcamp to grab Vyrion's *Geo* for as much or as little as you want to pay. Hail! **H**

Black metal
Sunshine Coast
vyrion.bandcamp.com

LATEST RELEASE

Geo by Vyrion

Words: Jeremy Vane-Tempest



If *Ne Obliviscaris* is the Harry Potter of Australia's extreme metal scene then Vyrion is the Neville Longbottom, the nerd who always sat at the back of class, who no one paid any attention to until one day he hit puberty and suddenly became the most capable and best-looking one of the lot of them. Enslaved at their finest don't hold a scented candle to *Geo* – let 'Apex' take you on a blues-infused journey of 1960s keyboard exploration while simultaneously smashing you in the teeth with a cricket bat; be traumatised by the unstoppable force of 'Pit'; have your soul frozen by the sheer cold of 'Polar'; be warned by the hellfire of 'Torch'.

It will take years for the rest of the world to catch on but eventually the masses will realise that Vyrion have hit puberty and *Geo* is world class.



GET TORCHED

'Apex'
@YouTube

Lagerstein

Words: Michelle O'Rance Photo: Adrian Pagano

What do you get when you combine pirates and catchy folk metal anthems about rum and beer? You get Lagerstein, the Aussies infiltrating the pirate metal party scene.

The band who hail from Brisbane and describe themselves as folky, pirate rock-metal with a drinking twist have been on a wild ride since their introduction in 2011 with their unique brand of pirate-metal and it's proving to be a very successful ride indeed. Pirate metal can be written off as something of a joke but those who underestimate this band or dismiss them as a gimmick do so at their own peril because no matter how much Lagerstein like to party, they are talented musicians with a shrewd approach to the business side of their band.

Lagerstein began when, sporting a hangover after a raucous night of drinking, lead guitarist The Majestic Beast decided that there were not enough drinking bands in Brisbane. So he recruited his brother, Neil Rummy Rackers, on rhythm guitar and The Immobilizer, the bass player from his other band. The Immobilizer brought Mother Junkst on keytar and violin into the party and Lagerstein – appropriately named because, you know, beer and cup – were born.

Lagerstein grew in popularity very quickly in the Brisbane scene with their rum and beer drinking odes, upbeat melodies, catchy lyrics and on stage antics – when was the last time you saw a beer bong onstage while all around it, musicians stood headbanging and skolling rum?!

Lagerstein quickly realised that they had a cult following as the size of the crowds grew at each gig and when people started showing up in pirate costumes, they knew they were onto something big; however, it was their 2012 full-length release *Drink 'Til We Die* that really started to get the party moving. Recorded and mixed with Adam Merker at Studio Anderz Debeerz and mastered by Lassie Lammert at LSD Studios in Germany, the album led to an invitation for the band to do a 15-date tour of Europe with fellow pirates Alestorm.

This was a proud moment for Lagerstein indeed and, to celebrate, they did what they do best to celebrate – they threw a party. But this was no ordinary party. The inaugural Lagerfest bash saw the launch of LagerLager, the band's signature beer brewed locally in Brisbane!

This turned out to be another great success for the band, so successful a shanty that it's become an annual tradition and to this day, the very first Lagerfest ranks as one of the best parties in Lagerstein history.

Discussing other big moments, the band recalls their recent trip to Bundaberg where they put on a small show to a crowd of about 100. Just playing in the birthplace of Bundaberg Rum, which they believe to be the greatest rum in the world, was a huge deal for Lagerstein as they have so many songs written about, and while imbibing, the famous spirit.

The party can't last forever though, at least not for vocalist Ultra Lord who recently parted ways with the band just after their return to Brisbane from Europe. In the wake of Ultra Lord's departure, the crew of the SS Plunderberg stayed positive and soon Cptn Gregarrrr was at the helm for Lagerstein, bringing along Jacob, the fiercest pirate in all the Caribbean, as Lagerstein's seventh member on the keys.

The band have since toured Australia with Gloryhammer and have visited Europe again for a string of sold-out shows with Alestorm in 2014, although there was a hiccup with visas that eventually saw them deported out of the UK. Luckily enough, they made it back inside to finish the tour.

The party continues for Lagerstein in 2015 as they are hard at work on their follow up album *All For Rum and Rum For All*, which they hope to release in June or July of this year. A national tour beckons, complete with regional destinations, so strap on your boots, dust off your scabbards and swords and start brushing up on your pirate vernacular because Lagerstein are recruiting more pirates into their crew every day and you don't want to miss the boat on this party. **H**

Pirate metal
Brisbane
lagerstein.com

LATEST RELEASE

Drink 'Til We Die by Lagerstein

Words: Michelle O'Rance



Drink 'Til We Die is the first release for pirate folk metal band Lagerstein. Hailing from Brisbane, the band have struck a unique sound with their odes to rum and their anthems about beer and piracy on the high seas.

It isn't all just about being a gimmick though as members of Lagerstein are quite talented, drawing from a variety of jazz, folk, metal, rock and classical backgrounds.

Incorporating keyboards, a keytar and a violin amongst the catchy guitar riffs and sing-along lyrics, Lagerstein have gained a huge cult following both here and abroad with this album.

Standout tracks include 'Pirate Music Piracy' and 'The Rum Thieves' but the whole album is a lot of fun from start to finish and, after the first few tracks, you will find yourself too wanting to drink rum and dress like a pirate while sailing the seven seas.



WALK THE PLANK

'Pirate Music Piracy'
@YouTube



Words: Billy Geary Photo: Louise Corry

The evolution of Melbourne's Jericco over the past six years has been a long and, at times, arduous process. Jericco began as bassist Roy Amar's pet project shortly after Amar immigrated to Australia from Israel, bringing with him a host of influences rarely seen in Australian music. His aim was to build a hard rock band around his Middle Eastern heritage, hence the name Jericco (a tribute to Israeli city Jericho).

The band's early releases exhibited a harmonious pairing of heartfelt alternative rock and Middle Eastern music, inviting the obvious comparisons to Karnivool, A Perfect Circle and the like; however, Jericco just seem to have that little bit of extra heart and passion when compared to their bigger influences.

Their first two EPs – 2009's self-titled and 2011's *Nice to See You* – thrust Jericco into the national spotlight within a short time. Tracks such as 'Sun' and 'B Song' are what typify Jericco and their unique heart-on-sleeve choruses with a slight experimental touch thanks to Amar's heritage. Aided by a couple of successful EPs, Jericco have built a substantial fan base in Melbourne and across Australia. If there were ever a decent litmus test for a local band it would be having a sold-out room screaming a chorus back at you in unison, something Jericco achieved in no time at all. Having played hundreds of shows, including festivals such as Pyramid Rock and Come Together, Jericco are well-versed in a live setting and this is evidenced on a live album recorded in 2011 on which the band's energetic and punchy live performance has been immortalised.

Jericco have had their fair share of line-up changes – the band calls it "teething" – rotating drummers and guitarists frequently over the past few years; however, the songwriting core of the band, Amar and vocalist Brent McCormick, has remained the same. The current iteration also features drummer Aiden King and guitarist Anthony Conelly (formerly of Melbourne's Geamala).

Jericco recently ditched keyboards to downsize from a five-piece to a four-piece and the band has streamlined their sound into big-hearted rock songs. Also appearing less frequently in the band's new music are the sweeping sections of oud, a Middle

Eastern stringed instrument similar to a lute, but subtle hints of Amar's heritage continue to shine through. This is the band's aim – to conjure images and stories from faraway places and cultures within the confines of a rock song. An important key to this is the songwriting ability of McCormick, who seems to have an uncanny knack for delivering passionate lyrics in a manner that isn't forced in the slightest. Combining this with a wide array of musical influences makes Jericco's ability as storytellers an absolute standout amongst a cluttered Melbourne rock scene.

The release of their debut album *Beautiful in Danger* in 2013 is well documented as a tough period for the band. As with many other local bands, the combination of line-up changes and lack of money very nearly brought about the end of Jericco. The album saw the band step away from their progressive influences in favour of a more straightforward, anthemic sound, resulting in the band losing much of the originality found on their earlier releases. The album itself did as well as any local band could hope for, peaking at 16 on the AIR charts and being widely acclaimed, despite the change in sound. Importantly, the significant sidestep in sound shows Jericco aren't afraid to change things up between records.

Jericco's second album *Machine Made the Animal* is due for release in March. Produced by Forrester Savell (Karnivool, Dead Letter Circus), the band are promising a return to old school Jericco – heavy, progressive and written with no boundaries in mind. That is certainly how the record comes across too, with no shortage of big choruses that are sure to have audiences singing along at gigs. As such, *Machine Made the Animal* is a statement, signalling a return to form for Jericco and cementing them as a band to watch in 2015.

Indeed, things are about to get a whole lot bigger for Jericco. On the back of a successful \$10,000 crowdfunding campaign to aid the publicity of the album and with no 'second album blues' in sight, the release of *Machine Made the Animal* will see Jericco attack larger venues on their upcoming album tour. The band is also in talks with a US management group, which could lead to an American tour later in 2015. Watch this space. **H**

Hard rock
Melbourne
jericco.com.au

LATEST RELEASE

Machine Made the Animal by Jericco

Words: Billy Geary



'Colour Outside the Lines' is a fantastically apt name for the first single and opener to Jericco's sophomore album *Machine Made the Animal*. The group's debut, *Beautiful in Danger*, was a somewhat inconsistent attempt to expand their audience outside of the progressive/alternative sound of their two EPs; however, *Machine Made the Animal* rectifies this, marrying the straightforward songwriting of *Beautiful in Danger* with the flair and uniqueness of their earlier material.

Everything about *Machine Made the Animal* is big – big riffs, big vocals and big hooks, typified by the chorus of 'Colour Outside the Lines' or the gang vocals in the Middle Eastern-tinged 'I'm Here'. Meanwhile, 'Silk Monday' possesses some of Jericco's best songwriting since 'Sun' from their self-titled EP, largely a result of Brent McCormick's vocal ability. It's not often that you get world-class hard rock in your own backyard but with *Machine Made the Animal* Jericco have managed just that.



CLIMB THE WALLS

'Colour Outside
the Lines'
@YouTube

Since their inception eight years ago, Hybrid Nightmares have released three EPs: 2009's *Hybrid Inquisition* kick-started the band's incredible journey and paved the way for 2011's self-titled release, which saw the callous quintet collaborate with metal

They're intense; they're angry; they're Hybrid Nightmares! **H**

LATEST RELEASE

Words: Matt Doria



**'Thrown To
The Wolves'
@YouTube**

Words: Patrick Emmett Photo: Andi Hedrick

Child Bite

From the home of Robocop comes Child Bite, a four-piece band with the perfect balance of challenge and entertainment. And if their self-proclaimed "music for losers" label is anything to go by, then the losers have one ridiculous sense of creativity.

Describing Child Bite's music is no easy task. The first era of the band in 2005-2010 showcased a quirkier, Devo-influenced sound, but as the line-up changed the music moved towards the roots of vocalist Shawn Knight. Now, their music gives you the "what the f**k" feeling you get from listening to bands like Mr. Bungle and Primus, but still has the attitude of '80s punk bands like Dead Kennedys and Black Flag. But even that description isn't enough.

The band released three albums during the first era of the band, but they have been on an EP kick for the second and current era. They released *Manomania* in 2012 and *Vision Crimes* in 2013, before being discovered by the legendary Phil Anselmo, who has supported this band by adding them to his Housecore roster for future releases.

2014 saw the release of their latest EP,

Strange Waste, on CD and 7" vinyl, as well as a special 5" record titled *Morbid Hits*, featuring covers from A/C's (you either know it or you don't) *Morbid Florist* album, with Anselmo on vocals. Accompanying *Strange Waste* is a music video for the song 'Ancestral Ooze'. The video is an interesting parody of the '80s film *Street Trash*, and features a cameo of Buzz Osbourne from The Melvins.

Child Bite wrapped up 2014 by releasing the new EP, touring the US with Australia's own King Parrot and playing the second annual Housecore Horror Film Festival. In 2015 they will be recording a new album at Anselmo's studio in Louisiana and touring through summer and fall. They hope to book an Australian tour in the near future so definitely keep an eye out for these guys.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Ancestral Ooze'
@YouTube



Words: Sofie Marsden Photo: LMG Productions

Orchestrating The Damned

When a band describes their own music as being political, spiritual, cathartic, completely f**king chaotic, violent, universal event that was thrown into a black hole leading into a dimension made entirely of acid tabs, weed and VB, you know you're in for something fun. Melbourne's Orchestrating The Damned are putting the groove back into technical death metal and their fast paced, highly energetic music is as powerful and heavy as you'd expect from any up and coming metal band wanting to make their mark.

Having played with fellow Australian metallers such as Whoretopsy, Vanishing Point, Hadal Maw, and A Million Dead Birds Laughing, Orchestrating The Damned have built up a reputation for being a solid live band, with top-notch technical skills. This should come as no surprise, as each member has a strong musical history in other successful metal bands. Brought together by Ne Obliviscaris' bassist Brendan Brown, the success to date of the band largely comes down to knowing the right people, and

working with others who want to challenge themselves musically.

There is no doubt that Orchestrating The Damned push themselves in their music. They are no generic death metal band that you find a dime a dozen every weekend, they are a band for those who want extra depth and detail in their music. While some may be content releasing metal geared towards mass appeal, these Melbourneans have injected some new life into the genre, not only with the technicality of their music, but also the creativity of their lyrics.

With recording set for the coming months, and a debut release aiming for a mid-year launch, Orchestrating The Damned have a lot to offer in 2015, and no doubt they'll bring their a-game.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Perforating The Hive'
@YouTube



Words: Matt Doria Photo: Anthelion

Anthelion

Is it possible to be gruesomely brutal and murderously fierce, all while authentically poetic? It sounds preposterous, but by some catastrophic freak of nature, Taiwanese black metal quartet Anthelion have managed to nail it.

Anthelion's bloody blend of unhinged fury and symphonic melody has led to the rapid climb of their hometown success, with an international explosion not too far off. Originally called Natural Phenomenon and without vocalist Code, Anthelion began in 2001 as a high school project between guitarist Zeist and drummer Troy, with Code jumping in shortly thereafter and bassist Siniz joining the band in 2009.

In Chinese folklore, the optical phenomenon of the anthelion presaged that a war amongst the three ruling powers of ancient China was impending. Foretold as indicative of an insurgent fusing of reign, the anthelion represented an extortion of fearlessness and clout. Inspired by their namesake, that mythology and psyche is where the band ground themselves. Potently dominating

both lyrically and instrumentally, Anthelion's ambitions are to tell powerful and enigmatic stories that are abundant in meaning.

When they aren't crushing fans' teeth by stage diving in cleats, or making appearances on mainstream Asian television, Anthelion are thrashing out their anger in (hopefully padded) studios and working on their next lunatic anthem. In the fourteen years that have followed their inception, Anthelion have released two albums, 2007's *Bloodshed Rebetfallen* and 2014's *Obsidian Plume* along with two EPs, 2004's *Bloodstained Anthelion* and 2010's *Manjusaka*. As they build upon their public image, Anthelion are hard at work on their next record, and have ambitious plans to tour internationally. However their path unravels, it's undeniable that Anthelion are already a deadly force to be reckoned with.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Obsidian Plume'
@YouTube



Words: Gareth Jones Photo: Josu Torrealday

Rise To Fall

Continuing to defy the tradition of quality melodic death metal hailing exclusively from its birthplace in the Scandinavian region, Rise to Fall from Bilbao, Spain have clearly been influenced by their Swedish/Scandinavian counterparts, taking the best parts from *Clayman* era In Flames, along with some modern Dark Tranquillity inspired electronics, all the while glossing it over with a certain pop sensibility and adding a touch of Spanish flavour to create their own spin on the popular genre.

Formed in 2006, Rise to Fall have released two well received albums in 2008's *Restore the Balance*, which enabled them the opportunity to play some huge European festivals supporting bands like Rammstein, Slayer and Bullet for my Valentine and their 2012 album, the fantastic *Defying the Gods* helped push the band's popularity even further, allowing them to tour all over Europe, Japan and beyond.

When quizzed as to what they would like the listener to take away from their music,

band vocalist Dalay Tarda quips "We always describe our music as a mix of strength, harmony and feeling. We are always looking for different colours to add to the painting and we are searching for the perfect fusion of feelings. This is what we want to give to our listeners. Our main goal is that people enjoy our music, either way".

This year is shaping up to be the biggest yet for the band with Dalay elaborating "We are just finalising the last arrangements for what will be our third studio album, which will see the light in 2015. So as you can imagine, we are craving to release the album and tour as much as possible". Also going on to add "Music is everything for us, we love what we do and we are keen to share our music with people around the world".

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Whispers of Hope'
@YouTube



Words: Justin Tawil Photo: Darryl Danger



Motherslug

This stoner doom band from Melbourne consists of five studious practitioners of groove and doom who have no problem kicking ass at a gig. Motherslug's sound is a unification of high energy Kyuss-esque riffs and slow, pounding Electric Wizard style sludgery that together form the monstrous sound that consolidates them as one of Melbourne's go to bands for stoner doom tunes.

Lead singer Cam Crichton describes Motherslug as being the "ABBA of the doom world". A unique and bizarre title to give themselves, one might think, but Cam justifies it so well by saying "we write pop songs disguised as metal, so when [listeners] kick back, light one up and listen to our tracks, my hope is that some part of those songs - the chorus, a line of a verse or the riff - sticks in their brain and annoys the hell out of them for the next three days."

In February 2012 Motherslug played their first gig at the Mecca of good times, Cherry Bar, and have since moved on to bigger and

better things by sharing bills with Windhand (USA) and Beastwars (NZ) at the Doomsday Festival and with Psycroptic at the sold out Brewtality Festival hosted by HEAVY Magazine. Motherslug gigs are notorious for consuming entire rooms in smoke machine created fog, which creates a complimentary atmosphere to their huge, crowd dominating sound. They are an act that are definitely worth taking the time to see.

The Motherslug discography isn't exactly a large one, consisting of only two EPs - *Three Kings in Darkness* and the other self-titled - however, the monumentally heavy riffs and the lingering flavour those tasty riffs leave behind make both EPs a worthy purchase to tie you over until the release of their debut full-length, which is in the works this year.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Symptoms of the Human Race'
@YouTube



Words: Callum Doig Photo: Rohan McHugh



Lizzard Wizzard

Brisbane natives Lizzard Wizzard are a four-piece entity that execute a uniquely trippy genre that could be described as containing elements of sludge and doom after an excessive amount of skulled beers and bong rips. And, somewhat fitting, the band's name sounds like that of an *Adventure Time* character. Being best mates since forever, Nick McKeon (The Fevered) and Michael Clarke (Through Plagues) jammed countless riffs before they bullied their buddy Luke Osborne (SMHG) into smashing the kit with them alongside Stef Roselli (Fvck Mountain) who pulls off the droned rumbles on bass while taking role as the quartet's blasting vocalist. The members spent a lot of time practicing a variety of scales and other techniques to perfect the quality that Lizzard Wizzard have demonstrated since their formation.

The band have circulated their self-titled EP since 2013 and have an exciting new release on the horizon, which is set to drop in early 2015 both digitally and as a rockin' 7 inch. Their self-titled EP, recorded and mixed by Mark Perry, includes some epic song titles such as 'Total Handjob Future', 'Game Of Cones' and 'Reptile Dysfunction', which demonstrates the four-piece band's humour laden creativity. Lizzard Wizzard have plenty of plans for the future, whether it be releasing trippy music or touring, make sure you jump aboard for the ride.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Reptile Dysfunction'
@YouTube



Words: Pat Warnes
Photo: Chris Dunks



Requiem

Do you like thrash and melodic death metal? Why not have both? Ararat based band Requiem provide just that, which is complimented by a mire of influences that make their sound into an even tastier mix, ranging from old-school to metalcore to more traditional metal influences. Aiming for their fans to take a variety of genres away from their music, Requiem most certainly do that. Their use of two vocalists adds to the variety as well, with one vocalist providing the thrash yells and the other providing the guttural death metal vocals.

With a band name that translates to Mass of the Dead in Latin, the band members all met in high school and currently boast ages that range from 15 to 19. Regardless of their young age, the band has gone on to play at festivals throughout Victoria such as Ausocalypse, Sonic Carnage and Bendigoat Metal Fest. They've also played in Adelaide and have plans to tour the East Coast this

year.

The band only has one EP to date, proving their worth within the Australian metal scene as it demonstrates their influences like a badge of honour and combines them into a solid sound. The band plan to release a follow up to their debut EP, *Mass of the Dead*, with a split EP early this year and then another release later in the year.

With new places to tour, playing Ausocalypse II in Bendigo alongside Lord, Orpheus Omega, Eye of the Enemy and more and planning multiple releases, it certainly sounds like 2015 is going to be a great year for Requiem so do yourself a favour and catch them if you can.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Mass of the Dead'
@YouTube



Words: Jeremy Vane-Tennest
Photo: Britton Hart



Axeslasher

Musicians adhere to a curious dichotomy: they either take themselves way too seriously, i.e. 30 Seconds to Mars, or they have a front-dude that calls himself Professor Pizza and they suspend a guy by his back skin and spray him with fake blood from a severed head during a show i.e. Axeslasher.

Deriving their name from their horror-inspired lyrics and the inevitable axe murders that slasher films tend to feature, they're a self-described gore-obsessed thrash band for fans of 1980s violent horror films, VHS tapes and sexy camp counsellors. They began their tenure after an acid trip in the Colorado woods in 2011. Because acid trips aren't traditionally synonymous with wise decisions, they initially chose to call themselves Toxic Shock and devote themselves entirely to songs about menstruation. Mercifully, they decided that songs about aliens feeding human flesh to colossal space death worms were cool too, and branched out beyond female bodily functions. Their first EP, *Anthology of Terror Vol. 1*, featured brutal music accompanied

by some pretty graphic lyrical content and opened the door for the forthcoming *Anthology of Terror Vol. 2*, which is currently in the writing and recording process. Unlike Vol. 1, it will see a physical pressing through Horror Pain Gore Death Productions, as well as a digital release for those that don't like physical copies. As far as the listening experience goes, Professor Pizza wants you to feel like you've just snorted a way-too-big hit of cocaine off a blood-soaked Bowie knife before descending into a hellish vortex of violence, hatred, and paper-thin swimwear and HEAVY can assure you that they've achieved the desired effect. Basically, if you're looking for a metal band that would make GWAR blush, check out Axeslasher.

CHECK 'EM OUT

'Mark of the Pizzagram/
Invasion of the Babesnatchers'
@YouTube



Sabbath, Bloody Sabbath

Words: Jason Fuller Photo: Matt Allan

Jason Fuller of Goatsound Studios rants about bands, recordings and whatever the hell he wants in this new column.



In my role at Goatsound, I have acted as producer/mix engineer/engineer/mastering guy on a bunch of shit like King Parrot, Kromosom, Brutal Truth, blah, blah, blah... Lots of stuff. I guess that's why they want me to write this column but, in all honesty, I don't really think I am qualified to tell people much about anything.

I do like a good chat though and, as you may already be aware, I am an opinionated asshat about a lot of stuff so I guess I'll be able to find something to talk about though in all probability it'll end up being a f**king bitch session because I'm a bit of a hater.

First up, Black Sabbath are great! This is an undeniable fact. I don't give two shits who you think you are within the metal community, this is something that we should all be able to agree on. Further to this fact, their first album, conveniently and creatively titled Black Sabbath, is still one of the best albums I've ever heard.

I have pondered the whyfors about this for over 20 years and it is simply undeniable and even though it's probably something like 30 years since I first heard it – shit, I'm getting old as f**k – I can still listen to it over and over.

Why is it so fucking good? Production? Maybe, but it was recorded mostly live in one 12-hour day on the way to a gig! How is that possible?! And why the f**k can't other bands surpass the quality of this recording?

Doom and sludge bands have been trying to better this for decades now and really no one has come close. Sure there have been some great emulations – pretenders to the throne – but Sabbath and this album in particular remain the f**king high point.

A lot of why I think this album sounds so good has very little to do with how it was recorded. Sure, they used the currently in-vogue analogue equipment that audio nerds drool over but the more important

reason it sounds great is because it features guys who were playing and rehearsing every day. They knew exactly how their songs went and each Sabbath member was aware that how well they played while recording would determine how good the record sounded. There was very little in the way of trickery – some rain and atmosphere, sure, but none of the stuff we overuse in recording sessions today like plug-ins, emulations, click-tracks, pro tools editing, hyper-compression, etc. All that shit was absent.

So if recordings today have all these great tools to enhance what we are doing, why do I still go back to a recording from 1969 so often? Because it is simply a killer band in a room together playing good songs. These skills above all are the most important things that a band can bring into a recording session.

Do you know how many times I have been asked "What mic will you use to capture my killer tone?" It is fucking constant! These questions are usually further followed by stories about how an album they like was recorded and what expensive gear was used. Very few bands seem to put this same amount of energy into the very simple and relatively-cheap act of rehearsing the fuck outta their shit!

I'm here to say that all the shit you may have read in audio mags about rare and esoteric microphone models, vintage tape machines, ultra-rare compressors and junk some douche may have used... all of this has very little relevance to whether a band is actually good. I would even go so far as to say that the studio itself has very little relevance in the end.

It is kind of a hard pill for me to swallow, being a studio owner/operator. I would love to say I'm doing something that is fuck-tonnes more important than I actually am. That's not to say that what I'm doing is unskilled work; it's just that the

band itself is far more important to me as a recording guy and as a listener, and that's what we are making music for, right? For people to listen to.

I don't want to put the studio side of things down too much or claim that we don't put in hard work to get a good recording. Production is an important part of an album. Furthermore, a good band will always sound better in a good studio with good gear but I think bands need to think more about the preparation of their material and playing it to the best of their ability.

The first Black Sabbath album would have sounded good pretty much anywhere it was recorded. I am sure of this. The human ear can hear a good band through a two dollar tape deck. In stark comparison, a shitty band in a recording session can spend months recording in a million-dollar studio and still be a shitty band.

Metallica is a good case in point here. The early albums they recorded really captured their passion for what they were doing and the recordings reflect that. You may want to blame their later albums on the production but, in all probability, you're just hearing a band that just don't have it anymore.

There was no Bob Rock or Mutt Lange around during that first Black Sabbath recording and certainly no million-dollar budgets to throw around – it's simply a great band doing what it is bands are supposed to do.

Hopefully I'll be speaking at you in the next issue of HEAVY, unless this column is so poorly received that I'm fired after this. If I am fired, then f**k you, HEAVY magazine; you can suck it!

Now go and crank that first Sabbath record to really hear what I mean. **H**

Jason Fuller has been drafted to talk about audio stuff because he runs a recording and rehearsal studio that has churned out some really good shit. He also played in Blood Duster. Check out goatsound.com for more info on his studio work.



Words: Amanda Mason, lawyer, Dwyer & Co Legal

Music industry Contracts for bands

Bands are businesses and the business world is fuelled by the exchange of contracts so a band signing a contract is pretty much inevitable. It's a good idea for bands to be familiar with the types of contracts that they might receive and to also know the alternatives that are available. Have no fear, HEAVY's legal guru is here to help by providing you with this overview of the contracts that are most commonly signed by bands.

Band Agreement

If you've read any of my previous articles in HEAVY, you'll already be aware of how keen I am on band agreements. I can't recommend them strongly enough.

As a band is a business (yes, I've said that many times before too), often a partnership between the members, it's a wise move to have a band agreement in place to document the terms of the partnership. You could say that a band agreement predicts the future problems that a band may have and then sets out the way those problems are to be handled. So while everything is going smoothly, the band agreement probably won't even be referenced but as soon as there's a dispute or a member is leaving/getting kicked out, the trusty band agreement will come into play and will set out how these things are to be handled.

Detailed information on band agreements can be found in issue 1 of HEAVY available at heavymag.bigcartel.com.

Management Agreement

If you've got a manager, you should have a management agreement. A band

gives a manager a lot of power, like the power to enter contracts on the band's behalf, post on its social media, book gigs, make payments, receive payments, communicate with record labels etc. Any of these things done poorly or negligently (or even spitefully if the relationship has broken down) can have a seriously adverse effect on a band's career and reputation. A good management agreement will provide the band with protection by expressly defining and setting the limits on the manager's power as well as legally binding the manager to act in the band's best interests and to represent the band in a professional manner.

Detailed information on management agreements can be found in issue 2 of HEAVY available at heavymag.bigcartel.com.

Licence Agreement

A licence agreement grants someone a licence to use your copyright. It could be the copyright in a song, a sound recording, artwork or any other copyright really. The most common form of licence agreement for bands would probably be for a licence of the copyright in a sound recording. For example, if your band's music is on iTunes,

Spotify, Bandcamp, Soundcloud etc. those sites have been granted a licence to use your sound recording. If you've signed to a label and they're going to press and distribute your album, then you've granted the label a licence.

Detailed information on licence agreements can be found in issue 7 of HEAVY available at heavymag.bigcartel.com.

Recording Agreement

A recording agreement (a.k.a. a record deal) in heavy metal is kind of like big foot - it's rarely seen and even when it is, it's probably just a guy dressed in a big foot costume.

When most bands say they've signed to a label, usually they will have signed a licence agreement and not what would be traditionally referred to as a record deal. With a licence agreement, the band will usually grant the label a licence to use the master recording of an album that the band has already recorded and the band will retain the ownership of the copyright in the master. However, with a recording agreement the label will pay the band an advance to record the album and the label will then own the copyright in the master. ►►

DOT THE D L I N E S

The label will probably also want to have a significant amount of creative control over the album, seeing as they will own it.

A record deal may also have options, exercisable by label, to tie the band to the label for future albums. This allows the label to hedge their bets by knowing that they've got the band signed for multiple albums if they want to, but gives them the opportunity to see if the first album does well before committing themselves to funding and releasing the band's subsequent albums.

Booking Agreement

A formal booking agreement is pretty rare if you're playing local shows, but you might receive one if you're supporting an international band, playing a festival or touring. A booking agreement will set out various things in relation to the gig, such as time, date, equipment provided, rider, staff provided and, most importantly, the amount you'll be paid, when you'll be paid and what you need to do to get paid. Many of these things will also be on the worksheet provided by the venue or promoter and, in the absence of a formal booking agreement, you can rely on the worksheet as evidence of your

agreement. However, as a worksheet is usually provided really close to the date of the gig, despite the gig having been booked months prior, the worksheet may not accurately represent what was discussed when the gig was originally booked, therefore a booking agreement signed at the time of booking the gig is always the preferable option.

Detailed information on booking agreements and how to get paid for gigs can be found in issues 5 and 9 of HEAVY available at heavymag.bigcartel.com.

Distribution Agreement

A distribution agreement sets out the terms on which a distributor will distribute a band's recordings. The agreement could cover just physical distribution (ie. the distribution of physical copies of albums) or just digital distribution, but more commonly it will cover both. It may also allow the distributor to press copies of the recordings too. **H**

When she's not changing the world as a lawyer with Dwyer & Co Legal, Amanda Mason loves to scour Twitter for tour rumours. Follow her at twitter.com/metalawyer.

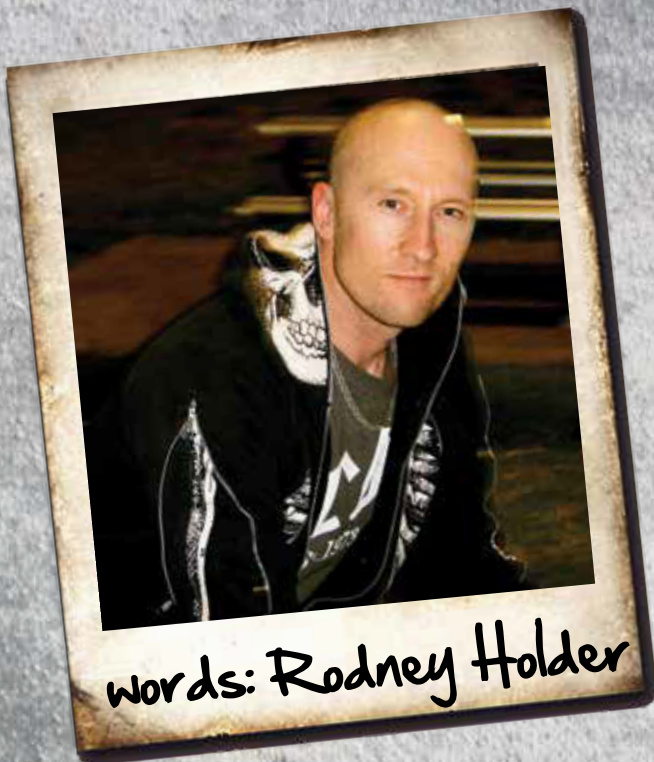
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Hit the road, Jack

As previously-reliable streams of income have dried up, like CD sales, touring has grown in importance for bands seeking ways to fund their recordings but it's not all groupies and good times; it's damn hard work.

"The worst thing about touring is the travel."
- Kerry King, Slayer.

Well, Kerry has done a lot more touring than I ever will but I actually thought that touring was loads of fun. Brutal on the body, soul and often the band's finances but always fun.

Can you all remember a time when hard-working bands would tour their arses off in order to promote their latest release? It was a time when an artist's great live performance could really be the catalyst for selling a shit load of physical recorded product – CDs, vinyl and even cassettes.

Of course being a great live act today is still vitally important but, these days, it's more likely an awesome show will help a band to sell shirts and other merchandise rather than inciting people to rush out to buy their latest tunes. I mean, let's be honest – why would the average music punter pay for something they can get for free? Statistically they don't anymore and illegal downloading has ripped the guts out of the record industry!

In any case, isn't it crazy how the tables have completely turned?

How, in today's music business climate, a good recording will hopefully not only garner people's attention to the artist and their music but also motivate fans to get off their butts and attend live shows.

Thus, bands need to really 'bring it' when they perform live because punters these days are just so spoilt for entertainment. Should they go see a live gig when they can stay home, turn on the footy, play video games, smoke bongs and watch *Game of Thrones* instead?

In 2015, the act of recording has basically become the marketing vehicle for the live experience! It's the calling card that motivates music lovers to attend a show and (hopefully) witness the awesome performance on record recreated live – bands that rely on beat detective and auto-tune beware!

These days artists generally put their tunes online and if they can excite people with their

recording they'll hopefully sell some concert tickets when their act comes to your town. And those concert ticket sales have become the financial life-blood for artists.

Depending on the act's profile, the live income they generate can provide just enough petrol money to get the van to the next town or the building blocks for a financial empire. Did you know that AC/DC grossed \$131.4 million on their Black Ice world tour just a few years back? How about when Metallica played Soundwave not long ago and reportedly pocketed a tidy sum of \$1.2 million per show?! Hey that's gotta help ease Lars' pain for all those copies of *Ride The Lightning* that have been illegally sucked down ethernet cables around the planet, right?

For the majority of bands, touring is definitely not all about fame and fortune. In fact, it's a flat out struggle. As Bonn Scott so articulately stated long before 'Acca Dacca' became an apex predator of the music business, it is a long way to the top!

Touring can be a serious financial burden for musicians, particularly when an artist is starting out or when they are trying to 'break' a new territory. It's often stated that a good band will need three attempts to actually make money when touring a new town. Regardless of this, all serious artists should tour.

When my band Alchemist were offered the Australian leg of a Meshuggah tour a few years back, there was no way that the agreed performance fee would go close to covering our touring expenses. With airfares, freight, accommodation, hotels, food, rental vans, equipment hire and more, the expenses add up quickly, and that's not including the loss of income we all incurred in taking a week off our day jobs.

We knew that we would lose thousands of dollars on that tour yet we agreed to do it because we wanted to share in the prestige of the event. We also wanted to perform in sold-out venues across the country and play to an audience who (we hoped) would appreciate our music. In this particular instance, we saw the financial loss of the tour as a promotional gain for our band and brand, and this is how it rolls

in the music industry.

Things really haven't changed too much over the years. The strategy is that if the artist is a good live act then regular touring will gain them new and loyal fans who will support the act's music and business endeavours. Thus touring is now the ultimate promotional tool – ever heard the saying a band is only as good as their last show?

This is exactly what AC/DC did when they began their career. They'd play and they'd play well and they'd play often and they'd play everywhere! This eventually led them to building a strong following around Australia. Then the goal became replicating that success in the UK, Europe and America.

I was lucky enough to interview AC/DC's first manager Michael Browning. He told me how the band initially made the majority of their money here at home. They would then tour the UK where they would spend that money trying to develop a new audience, and return once their funds were depleted to "top up the war chest" by touring where they knew they could make more cash.

We continue to see this strategy being implemented today with Aussie acts like Psycroptic and King Parrot – Matt Young from King Parrot told me recently that the band is striving to play an astounding three hundred shows this year!

So hear me when I say touring is fun but brutal.

Not long ago, I spoke with Alex Webster from Cannibal Corpse and he summed it up: "Do it while you're young. If you get the chance to tour while you're young and you've got a job that's not that great – if you can get away with it – just screw the job and go do the tour because that's the time to do it. You don't want to be making these big decisions when you're thirty-five and you've got a kid and a great job; it's a lot harder. We have friends that are in their thirties and they're like, "God I wanna go tour but now I'm making eighty thousand dollars a year at this job and I've got two kids." If you get that chance when you're young and you get signed somehow, just go for it."

Rodney Holder has been a drummer, writer, promoter and manager in music for over 20 years so when he talks, you listen. He's best known as that guy from Alchemist, that guy from Metal For the Brain and that guy who runs musicbusinessfacts.com.



FUGGEN WEIRD SHIT

Weird Band Names

ABÖRTED HITLER CÖCK

Abörted Hitler Cöck are a grindcore band (surprise, surprise) whose Facebook page describes them as “totally inoffensive and unprovocative” but one only needs to venture to the biography section of their website to discover that the band was formed after “porno-gore luchadores” El Bukkake and El F**ko fled their hometown of Rape City after performing back-alley abortions. Not offensive at all. Their bio does, however, interestingly note that they intentionally adopted the worst band name conceivable. No arguments there.

I HATE WHEN ELEVATOR'S DOOR OPEN UP AND A RAPTOR APPEARS IN FRONT OF ME

This is possibly the best band name ever (and incredibly handy for writers struggling to hit their word count). And the band's genre? Dinogrind! Inspired by *Jurassic Park*, I Hate When Elevator's Door Open Up And A Raptor Appears In Front Of Me is the Italian one-man band of creative genius Nicolò Paracchini.

ANAL VOMIT

Everyone's favourite Peruvian death metal band Anal Vomit sourced a delightful name that conjures up only the best mental imagery from a song of the same name by the now defunct Brazilian extreme metallers Sarcófago.

POOPFIST

There's a real excrement and anus theme going on with these band names isn't there? United States' own Poopfist are a – wait for it – poopcore band! [Oh God, no! – Ed.] They're also, presumably, the only band in the genre. If poopcore wasn't enough to make you poop your pants then wait 'til you hear the band members' names: Anal Samuelson, Baron Gunter von Prolapse, Mikey Bloat and Charlie McRapekit. Stay classy Poopfist.

BATHTUB SHITTER

Photo: Marc Levin

Judging by the titles of their songs and their song lyrics, one can only assume that influential Japanese extreme metal/grindcore band Bathtub Shitter chose their name because they have some sort of fascination with faecal matter but the band's website assures us that, underneath all of the poop references, their lyrics deal with serious subject matters like World War I and the Pacific War. The band also have their own record label aptly titled (S)Hit Jam Records.

SATAN'S ALMIGHTY PENIS

Satan's Almighty Penis are a two-piece experimental black metal band from the United States and, like many of the band names in this article, their name was conjured up in an effort to offend and shock. So they're not all hot for Satan? Hmm, Hot For Satan would make a great band name.

55 GORE

While Finland's porno gore-grinders 55 Gore don't seem to have a totally ridonk band name, the band's actual name is, accordingly to internet legend, the incredibly lengthy 55-word band name Intracerebrally Consuming Cephalalgia Through The Cranium Macerating Debrisf**ked Manure Ingested Remains Of The

Naming your metal band probably wasn't so hard in 1970 but it has today become quite the challenge. *Encyclopaedia Metallum* currently lists 100,934 bands so new groups are resorting to being as creative as possible when coming up with their band names. We've scoured the world of heavy music so that we can present you with some of the most ridonk, cray-cray, super weird heavy band names in existence. Enjoy!

Mindf**ked Cataplexic Wicked Mankind Whom Fistf**ked The Progenies From The Deepest Depths Of The Analmaggot Raped Human Pieces Of Erotic Shitmasses Which Gave Birth To Worthless Eunuchs As Travesty For Cumstained Whorefaced Sluts Enslaved By This Stupid Society Full Of Fetal Garbages. Yeah... um. Next.

BONDAGE FRUIT

The Japanese self-proclaimed avant-prog rock/Zeuhl band Bondage Fruit not only have a weird name but they also fall within a weird genre. Their interesting name leaves you with the lingering question, “Which fruit would be the bondage fruit?” And the answer to that question, my friend, is oranges because they're always sold all tightly restrained in those red net bags.

THE FART SIMPSON BAND

The Fart Simpson Band, whose name was presumably inspired by the Simpsons, are a gritty rock band hailing from Portugal. Their debut release entitled *Away to Mexico* recorded sometime in the mid '90s addressed, according to the band, diverse topics such as religion and bestiality. How very profound.

ANAL C**T

United States grindcore outfit Anal C**t derived their name from the attempts of their founder, the late Seth Putnam, to come up with the most stupid and offensive name possible and, back in '88 when the band was formed, it probably was. Putnam was also involved in some other bands with great names like Full Blown A.I.D.S., Vaginal Jesus and C**tsaw. [Da man – Ed.]

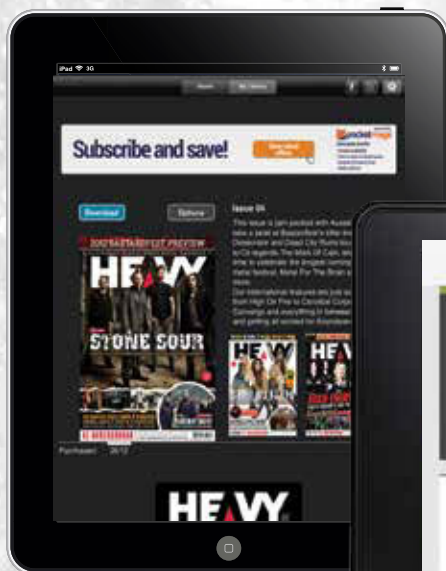
THE TONY DANZA TAPDANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

Hailing from Tennessee in the United States, The Tony Danza Tapdance Extravaganza derived its name from none other than Tony Danza from popular '80s sitcom *Who's The Boss*. Apparently, Danza was something of a tap dancer. The name doesn't really shout 'mathcore' or even metal of any genre but it certainly makes you want to go and have a listen and, hopefully, a tap or two.



Bathtub Shitter

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